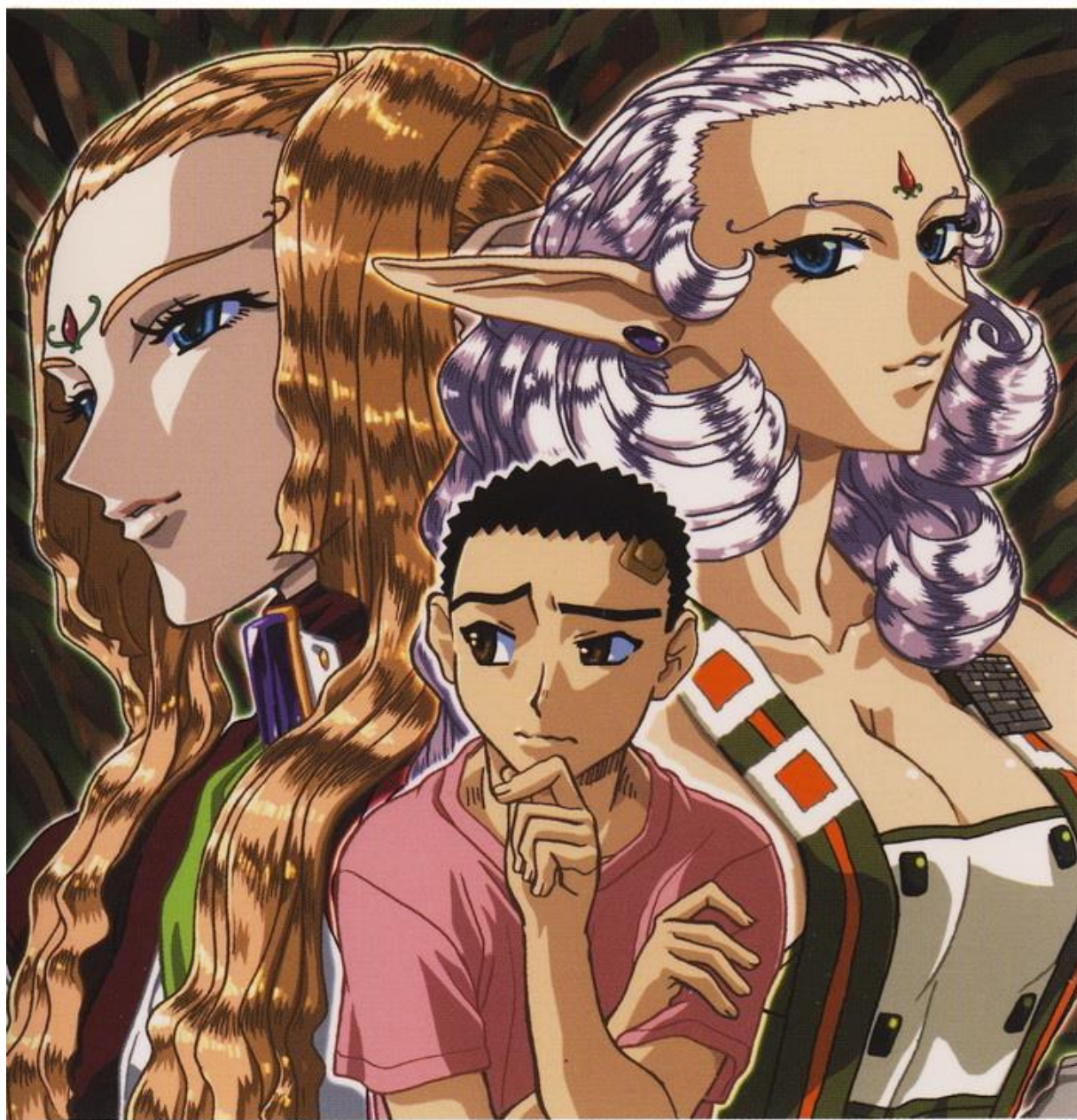


真・天地無用！ 魍皇鬼外伝

天地無用！ GXP 15

梶島正樹



ファンタジア文庫

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SHIN・TENCHI MUYO! RYO-OHKI GAIDEN

真・天地無用! 魍皇鬼外伝

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簾座編
RENZA ARC

“Please
stop that!
There
are many
young
soldiers
here.”

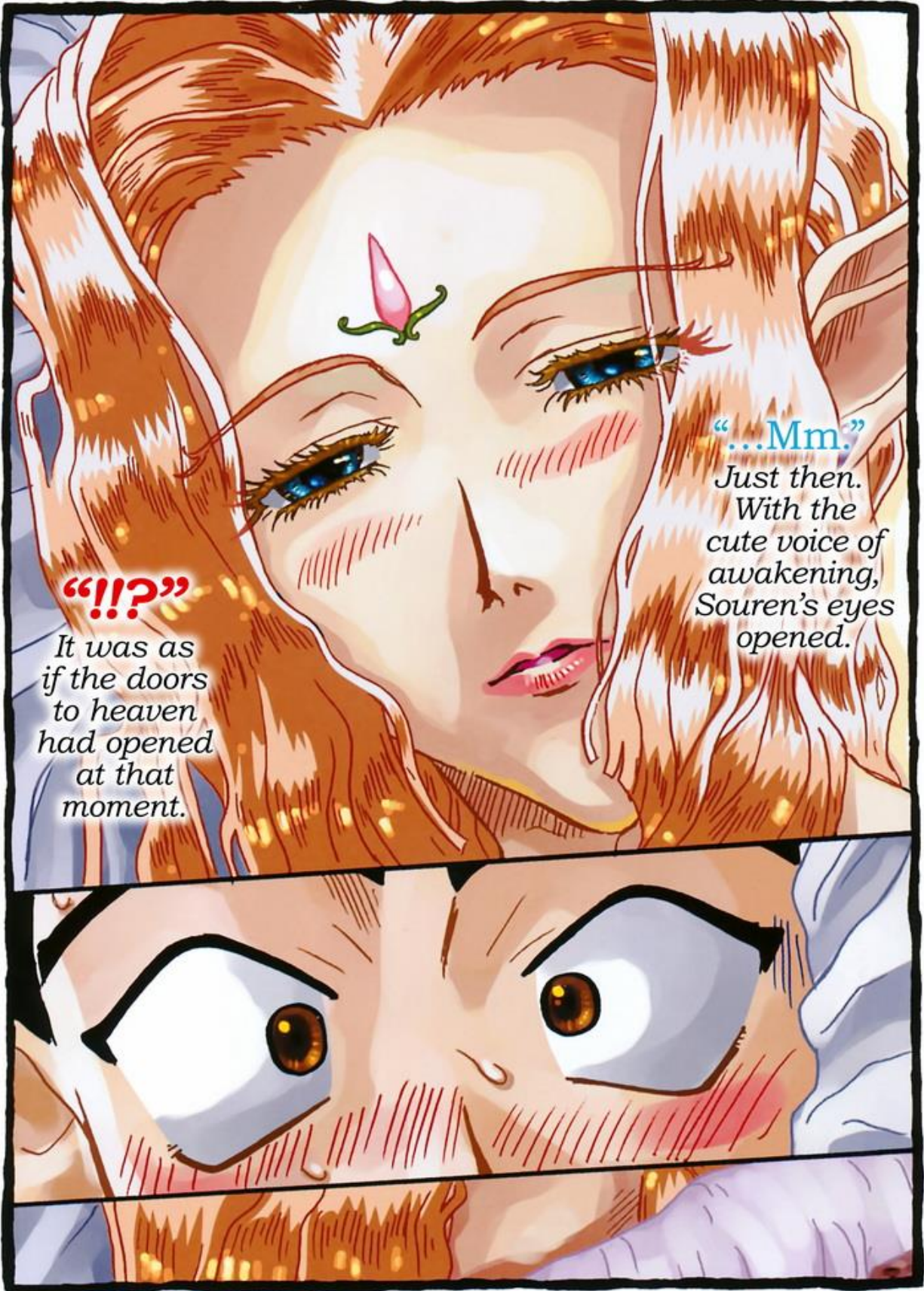
NAGATO

She
suddenly
noticed that
people were
glancing at her.
Some of them
were leaning
forward a little,
but that was
nothing
unusual.

“It’s
nice to
be young.
They get
excited over
something
like this.”

AIREN KARYUKU KAOU





“!!?”

It was as
if the doors
to heaven
had opened
at that
moment.

“...Mm.”

Just then.
With the
cute voice of
awakening,
Souren's eyes
opened.

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Chapter One: An Elf's Murmur

*** * * Editors' notes:**

- 1. I went ahead and did Chapter 1 anyway as it gives a small glimpse into the "Great Beauty" that Seina married, mentioned in OVA 5, episode 3.**
- 2. This chapter is told first person; the rest of the book is third person.**
- 3. This chapter is a flash forward. Could be as much as 2 years. * * ***

"Oh, it's another beautiful day."

The sky is a clear blue, high and cloudless. The humidity is low despite the strong sunshine, so it's surprisingly cool in the shade. If a breeze blew, it would be reasonably pleasant, but unfortunately there was no wind at the moment.

"Well, I'm grateful for that, though."

The wind is my worst enemy, whipping up fine dust and damaging my precious things. In the distance, I stare blankly at the flickering shimmer of the sun, the nearly empty horizon distorted by the intense heat of the sun. The intense sunlight and heat, as well as the reflected light from the ground, make it impossible for any animal to be active during the day.

Correction, "You can see shadows running around in the shimmering sun."

The second biggest cadet is the one who is shouting and running under the blazing sun. They are the ones who are ruining my precious, precious art.

"Can't it just rain and clean them up?"

It rarely rains here, but when it does, it's a downpour. The desolate land has no water retention capacity, and the water that collects in the lowlands quickly increases in volume, sometimes to the point of flooding.

"That's how we'll get them all. Kukkukku."

After that, when the water retreats, greenery sprouts and the land becomes wonderfully green. Of course, they will also return to the earth as fertilizer, so we can kill two birds with one stone.

"Oh, but then there's"

There is one drawback to this. The sprouting greenery looks like heaven, but it only lasts a few weeks. In no time at all, the land returns to its original dry state. Sometimes there is a nasty giant weed called the "magic tree" that grows. They are extremely fertile and can turn into dense forests in a few years if left unchecked. This may seem like a good thing for the greening of dry land, but these dense forests are a tricky thing to deal with, and the explosive growth of small animals can cause considerable damage to crops, especially in agricultural areas.

In addition, the dense forest of magic trees produces a large amount of a mysterious substance called “magic”, which when concentrated, can cause animals to become violent as they may develop special abilities and may attack people. That's why I have to cut it down and burn it down immediately. The magic can also affect people and cause them to develop special abilities, but only in children. In the case of people, it doesn't make them violent, but it does create organs in their bodies to store magic. I have one and it's a complicated feeling, because, dammit, I need it.

“But I don't know if I want this empty place to turn into a jungle. If you think about it, bad cadets break my precious things more often than demon elements, you know. Yes! First, I should use those annoying cadets as bait for the demon beasts, and then burn down the demon tree after they are gone from my sight, ahahaha.”

“Airen Karyuku Kaou, Heavenly Lieutenant Lord, even if you are a princess of the Sakura Flower Kingdom, please do not dress in such a trashy manner and mutter dangerous complaints in male language.”

The one who interrupted my pleasant fantasy with a really cold tone was the technical maintenance officer, Lieutenant Nagato.

“Even though I’m a princess, I’m just royalty with no real authority.”

“Even if you don't have any real power, you are still from a famous family and are allowed to attend central social gatherings, so you still have as much influence as the head of the Kaou.”

She started to complain about something goofy, but it's always the same, so I ignored her. Incidentally, I'm in the Armored Cavalry hangar at Abad Base, the only spaceport on the planet Abaryum. The building, made of a special white ceramic structure, is very plain and tasteless, lacking any of the glamour or bustle of a commercial spaceport. The surrounding area is a barren land with a desolate landscape, and the nearest town is about five hundred kilometers away, with almost no people coming and going.

Abaryum is a remote planet that is off the regular shipping routes. That's why there is no spaceport for civilian use and this base plays that role as well. There are only regular flights once a month and a large cargo ship that brings in goods from the outside once every six months. So, inevitably, the only people who have business here are almost exclusively military personnel.

Well, even though it's in a remote area, it's still a planet. It's prosperous and has a surprisingly large population. However, the majority of people are satisfied with their lives here and have no need for the spaceport. However, there are still some young people who yearn for the outside world.

The problem is the economic disparity and the lack of distribution. If you want to live here, there is no problem, but if you want to move to another planet, you need a lot of money, contacts, and

transportation. Most of the politics and economics are done on this planet, but if ordinary people want to have contact with the outside world, the most direct way is the military.

If you get ahead in the military, you can get in touch with the outside world, or you can be transferred to another planet or even to the central worlds.

(That's why the supply of cadets will never run out.....) I look around the hangar and let out a sigh.

"Lieutenant Airen, are you listening to me?"

"Hmm?"

In the meantime, after a lengthy explanation, she is standing in front of me, with her light brown hair cut into a bob. Her eyes are sharp, and she looks like a soldier. She wears a mechanic's military uniform, has tight limbs and small breasts, and looks like a neutral man at first glance.

"... .. I like it. I like your small breasts." I couldn't help but utter.

"Lieutenant Airen-dono. Are you looking for a fight?"

"You know I'm jealous of you, right? Big breasts just get in the way of maintenance."



I peeled off the top of my uniform and carelessly grabbed my breasts.

"Please don't! There's a lot of young soldiers here."

I suddenly noticed the eyes of the cadets running outside, glancing at me. Some of them are bending forward a bit, but that's always the case.

"It's good to be young, isn't it? They can get excited by this kind of thing. Maybe I'm going to be their wanker fuel tonight?"

"As I've said many times before, you should be aware of your own appearance as an Ancient Elf! That's not something that an unmarried princess would say."

I myself don't think I'm that good of a princess, but I'm considered one or two of the

most beautiful princesses in Kaou. However, the standard of beauty and ugliness in Kaou is somewhat ambiguous, especially because there are other races called sub-humans.

In the first place, the Ancient Elves are considered beautiful if they have modest breasts. So, my large breasts are a bit out of line with that standard. Besides, even if you call me an unmarried princess, I'm 118 years old this year, an age when most Ancient Elves would have gotten married by now, even if they take a long time to grow up. But I still haven't found a partner to marry yet. I'm not proud of it, but it's as big as my breasts!

"Hmph! I don't want to get married at all. I'd rather be single for the rest of my life than open my legs to the nauseating bunch of people above me." I got up, folded my arms, and glared at Lieutenant Nagato.

"That line Is that from the Musou Weak Knights band?"

"Oh, you know them? It's no wonder, you're also here maintaining the Armored Cavalry."

"The Warriors Weak Knights Band" is the title of an old show. In the Renza Federation, large or small, the humanoid Armored Cavalry is the weapon of choice. Of course, we're all well aware of their inefficiency as weapons. But there is something about them that outweighs their inefficiency, something that brings elation and awe. There is a beauty of style, and we love it so much.

And since we have the scientific power to operate such inefficient weapons on a remote planet, we don't have the option of not using them just because they are inefficient. And of course, because of this, there are many dramas for young and old featuring the humanoid Armored Cavalry. And the "Warriors Weak Knights Band" is a work that created a bit of excitement. It was not popular with mothers and guardians of the world because of its rather vulgar lines, but entertainment is always more interesting when it is poisonous.

"It doesn't matter that Lieutenant Airen's foul mouth is delaying her marriage, and I think it's her own fault, but this is a military base and we're on a mission, so if you don't behave a little better, you won't be able to show the people below you."

"Duty? It's no wonder I'm bored since you guys took away my job, isn't it? Whose fault is it that I'm stuck here in a corner of the hangar providing tonight's wank fuel for bad cadets? If you have a problem with that, give me back my lovely Weak Knights and let me get to work!

Weak Knights are eight-meter tall, general-purpose, humanoid Armored Cavalry, the lowest rank of Armored Cavalry. It is the first cavalry body that every humanoid Armored Cavalry pilot has to deal with, so many veterans prefer it and dare to customize it.

(No! It's cool to beat the top Armored Cavalry with these Weak Knights!) Those who are qualified to pilot the Heavenly Knights class of Armored Cavalry in the final battle should be strong enough to do so. Winning on cavalry performance is the height of wildness.

“You are welcome to instruct us as much as you like, but if you take everything away and do it yourself, we will not be able to train our new recruits. And you'll have to do it manually, etc.”

Then Lieutenant Nagato glared at my chest, as if it were an enemy of her parents. “That's why your breasts are in the way, sir!”

Well, manual labor involves a lot of hard work and getting into tight spaces. My big chest is in the way. “I don't care if you stare at me that much.”

In the past, in the early stages of civilization, it would have been difficult to change the size of a person's breasts without changing their function. With today's medical technology it was easy. However, this kind of plastic surgery is usually not welcomed, although the idea changes a bit depending on the era.

The beauty that people seek is mostly what the majority of people consider to be beautiful. Of course, it varies from person to person, but they are all similar. Moreover, modern medical technology can change the genetic structure of a person, which is not in line with the concept of diversity. This is why the practice is basically considered taboo.

There are also patents on genetic modification. For example, it is forbidden to mimic the appearance of a famous actress. Of course, if you are born that way, there is no problem. After all, there are patent restrictions on most forms of beauty.

Even before that, there is a deep-rooted belief that it is better to be natural as you were born. In the Kingdom of Kaou, it is mortally embarrassing for anyone, regardless of gender, to have their plastic surgery revealed. In other words, for this reason, Lieutenant Nagato, who admires large breasts, sees my breasts as an enemy.

“In the first place, I can't make them smaller either. So, it's mutual.”

“Lieutenant Airen, is it my imagination that I feel like I'm getting a one-sided mauling?”

“It's called a difference in values. I'm jealous of your little tits.”

“Kudos ... anyway! No matter, even though we are the Space Force of a provincial country planet, they have maintenance machines, and even medical tanks.”

It was true that there were only a few people who could repair an Armored Cavalry by hand nowadays. Everything is replaced unit by unit by machines, and biological parts are repaired with nanomachines. However, there are still many veterans who do maintenance by hand. Even

though the Weak Knights have been simplified, they are still made to look like people. They have many complicated moving parts. That's why skilled craftsmanship is what makes the Weak Knights more than just miscellaneous soldiers.

"Heck! With supply stagnation and budget cuts, our maintenance units are in a state where they tend to function poorly. You'll never get satisfactory performance without some manual labor."

Especially on the front lines, where maintenance equipment is in short supply, the manual labor of veterans often comes in handy. It's like a field hospital.

"It's true that in a remote base like this, personnel like Lieutenant Airen are very useful, but don't forget that this is also the reason why you were sent here as punishment and missed seeing the legendary Godly Knights."

"Gah!" I was hit with an unexpected and painful counterattack, and I fell forward with a crumpled heap.

My friend, Shien Rengoku Kasen, the third daughter of the first prince of the Kingdom of Kasen, who entered the Galactic Federation under the name of Karen and destroyed the great pirates there instead of seizing the Imperial Ship. She brought back the ship, and the supreme Knight who was legendary in Renza, the man who became its master, the twin gods of all the beginnings, and one of the pillars, "ZINV".

"I wanted to see, I wanted to see, I wanted to see" It's frustrating. It was really frustrating. I wanted to see it up close, to touch it. But I couldn't go there. In fact, I was supposed to go to the Galactic Federation.

Seeing my appearance, Lieutenant Nagato's expression returned to normal.

"A true legend. But was it real?"

"I showed you the footage of the battle! It's definitely real! I swear it!"

"Yes, it's definitely unusual, but still, we came here early"

When Lieutenant Nagato said that one of her men rushed up to her and interrupted the conversation.

"Excuse me, sir! Lieutenant Nagato-dono, Weak Knight maintenance is complete, all figures are in order!"

"Where are the cadets?"

"They're already assembled, sir. The team in charge of the recruits is also standing by."

“Lieutenant Airen, the work you've been waiting for is done.” Lieutenant Nagato said with a smile on her face. But I know how much intrigue is hidden behind that sweet talk. The subordinate who came to report to me didn't say anything important either.

“You want to train new recruits, don't you, Lieutenant Nagato? If that's the case, why don't you let him stay there until the end? Hmm? Take your time with your hands.” I sarcastically said with a bit of an obscene hand motion. But Lieutenant Nagato's expression remained fearless.

“It's about the awarding party of the Ennoblement of Altus Algurs next week ...”

“Huh? That bastard is having a party for a personnel matter that hasn't even been decided yet?” My brow wrinkles up. He's the source of all my frustration and stress.

“You're speaking too loudly. It's not the party I'm talking about. I'm talking about the freighter that's bringing in the supplies for that party.”

“Hey! Maybe he has a guard of Armored Cavalry!?” To be frank, I don't care about the bastard's party, but there will be an escort to transport the important supplies. And if I'm right.....

“Two of the new Earthly Knights, “Fei Rong” will be here for maintenance, but if Lieutenant Airen is so sure, it will be a good experience for the newcomers.”

“Come on, let's go! After all, the final adjustment work is too much for a rookie. And of course, the new Earthly Knights.”

Well, I guess I'll let the new Armored Cavalry do the talking and go along with Lieutenant Nagato's ploy. The ranks of the top Armored Cavalry are Weak Knights, Earthly Knights, Aquius Knights, and Heavenly Knights, in that order.

I rushed to the hanger where the cadets were waiting. And there, the bastard Suisa was giving the newcomers a lesson in self-praise that would rot your ears and make you want to punch him in the face. Well, to sum it up, if you want to get off this prison-like planet, don't disobey, do what I say.

“Oh! Lieutenant Airen!”

The bastard who had been giving a great lesson noticed me and came running over with a big smile on his face. The lesson was cut short, but he was just bragging about something that didn't matter anyway, so it was a little annoying to see the relieved faces of the cadets that were released from it, but I know the feeling well, so I put up with it.

“Commander Altus Algurs, thank you for your efforts.”

Well, he's my superior officer in a way, so I salute him. Yes, of course, I'll wear my uniform properly, but this is not because I'm a superior officer, it's to hide my flabby body from the constant gaze of the asshole.

"Just as well. I was just about to give you an invitation."

I'm not happy!

"In a week's time, there's going to be a big party to celebrate my elevation and bestowal. So, I'd really like to invite you to attend, Airen Karyuku Kaou-sama."

In other words, he didn't want me to attend as Lieutenant Airen, but as the princess of the Kaou royal family.

"Wasn't it six months later that the decision of the granting of the title was made?"

"No, no, I received an advance notice from someone in the Royal Court's Executive Office that it would be announced soon. Well, I thought it was a little early, but people around me thought that we should celebrate the happy occasion right away. After all, this is a place where entertainment is scarce, so I thought that as the person who stands at the top, I should take the opportunity to do so."

"How wonderful. But I'm troubled. I thought it was going to be held in six months, so I sent my formal wear to maintenance while I still could."

"Oh my God!" His skeevy face contorts.

After all, what he wants is me in formal attire, in my position as the princess of the Kaou royal family. If he just wanted me to attend, I would wear a military uniform, but that would mean I would be attending as a subordinate. In other words, the clothes I wear will tell everyone what I think of this bastard, and it will change his status.

Well, this is just a way for the royals to say no, "I don't have any clothes to wear." Of course, I have spare clothes, and if I hurry up, I can make it in time, but there is no value or meaning in spending the express fare to attend a recital for this limp dick bastard.

In the first place, even though I no longer have any real power in Kaou, I still have many social and business contacts as a member of the royal family. When it comes to the schedule of events to be attended in formal attire, it would have to be decided at least six months in advance. To make such a sudden interruption, it would have to be someone very important or close to me. Even though he was the commander of the Armored Cavalry unit, it was too inappropriate to ask me to attend in formal attire, let alone in military uniform.

(Well, I'm the reason for that.)

In other words, they look down on me as a delinquent princess who has been forced to stay in this place because there is no one to take me as a wife. I'm a princess, even if I'm rotten. The merit of inviting the royal family to the general public is immeasurable.

"Please invite me again in six months when you give me official notice."



Of course, my formal attire would not arrive at that time for other reasons. However, since it was a transfer party for a superior officer, I would attend in military uniform, and I would be happy to congratulate him.

(Of course, I'll just show my face and go home quickly Hmm?)

I looked behind me and saw two female officers staring at me.

(You don't have to stare so much; I'm not going to steal him.)

The two women are famous in this base for their good looks, and they have been hired to be public relations officers. He has no intention of paying respect to a delinquent princess without a mate. I am fully aware of this, of course, and those sluts are also victims of the bastards, so I'm not going to get upset about something like this.

"All new cadets, hurry up and board! Don't waste any time! Run for it!"

I gave the bastard a quick salute and kicked the cadet's asses. I'd rather deal with a bunch of cadets than watch them crack under their filthy ravings and thick makeup forever.

"... .. hmm?"

That's when I noticed that there was someone a little different among the cadets.

Being chosen as a Weak Knight pilot is the first step on the career ladder. You're nervous, you're afraid, and you're even more nervous when it's your first time aboard an Armored Cavalry. Of course, even the most seasoned veterans are nervous when it comes to actual combat.

But one of them, the one who runs like lightning to the Weak Knights, is clearly still a young cadet. However, the figure behind it seems to be the veteran operator of an instructor, no, it felt the atmosphere similar to the Knight riding the Heavenly Knights that I saw when I was in the Royal palace.

(Stupid, it was just my imagination)

When I saw the young man with a shaved head, which is rare nowadays, and still had a hint of innocence, I shook my head to drive the thought out of my mind.

Adjustment is the process of linking the Cavalry to the operator. However, it is not as simple as it sounds, and the level of linkage can be customized from complete thought control to manual operation. This is why it takes a long time of training, adjustment, and training of the auxiliary AI before you can use the Cavalry like a limb. Of course, by the time the cadets arrive here, they will have been customized to some extent through simulations, but it is still necessary to accumulate and correct data through adjustment training using the actual Cavalry, and through experience in actual competition.

“Listen up! Your current data is only from simulations. The actual Cavalry have their own quirks, and their conditions change from moment to moment while being piloted. And that includes your physical condition and mental state! This is even more apparent during actual combat. Of course, the computer and auxiliary AI will help you fine-tune it, but don't be overconfident!”

I checked the adjustment status of each of the Cavalry and their cadets and gave instructions to each of them.

“In the event of a battle, the computer may be damaged. And each computer has its own quirks. Of course, this is usually a small margin of error. But in a battle, it will appear as a slight lag, and the accumulation of that slight lag can be the difference between life and death. So don't neglect your training until you can completely control the cavalry by yourselves!”

There is a sense of unity that only comes from being in a humanoid weapon. It is something that cannot be expressed in numbers, something that is truly vague and unscientific, it could be described as occult. However, this is the reason why inefficient humanoid weapons outperform conventional weapons.

When fully adjusted, Weak Knights can become the very body of the manipulator, turning him or her into a superhuman. The Weak Knights can attack, evade, defend, and perform every action with an order of magnitude more precision and movement than any other weapon.

Of course, this requires both the training of the operator himself and the training to adjust. Only a handful of people are capable of this, and in simple combat, ordinary weapons are far more

efficient. Beyond a certain level, however, the Armored Cavalry becomes a truly one-of-a-kind, all-purpose superweapon with far greater versatility.

"Hmm?"

That's when I noticed the operator who was having a hard time adjusting.

"What's wrong?"

"I'm sorry, sir, I'm having trouble stabilizing the link with 013."

"I see the operator's vitals are stable."

It was hard to believe that he was a rookie, but rather he was stable like a veteran. I took a glance at the cockpit and saw that it was the young man I had seen earlier.

"However, 013 also had no problems with the maintenance checks"

"It's all about the reality in front of us! Hurry up and recheck!"

"Yes, sir!"

The program that checks the pilot's status, is restarted to make sure there are no problems, and the check is started immediately. After tens of thousands of checks in just a few seconds, the Weak Knight and the pilot are both clear.

But the link was still unstable.

"Lord Lieutenant ..."

He sighs at the pilot, who looks up at him anxiously, and displays his profile.

"Weak Knight 013 pilot, Seina. He's originally from the 'amusement park', he has a magical organ."

The largest continent on the planet, Avalum, has been completely overrun by a sea of magical trees. In addition, there are various other large and small islands, as well as some areas on other continents, which cover about 70% of the total land surface. There are many people who live their lives by using the phenomena created by transforming the magic emitted by the magical trees. Rejecting scientific civilization, these people live a slow life, just like an early civilization, using magic, magical trees and mutated magical animals as resources.

They call the continent of magical trees the 'amusement park', because to outsiders, it's a kind of carefree life, but all the people living there have organs that store magic.

"But we didn't see any problems in the simulation phase?"

“Those who have organs that store magic have their bodies enhanced by magic to varying degrees. However, if they come here and experience a shortage of magic, their metabolic functions will drop.”

“That should have been included in the data, too.”

Renza has a good amount of data, especially since Kaou has many magical organs. The operator looks at me in frustration.

“Don't put too much faith in the magical organ data. Rescan it and pass it on to us.”

The magic organ and science and technology do not go well together. The accumulated data is just enough to get it working, but not enough to guarantee it. I ordered the operator to do so, then rushed towards Weak Knight 013 and plunged my upper body into the cockpit.

“Ugh!”

“Recruit Seina, you have a magic organ, right? What's your rank?”

I turned off the communicator and spoke in a whisper to the young man, who seemed a little puzzled by the sudden thrusting of my upper body into him. It's common knowledge that the number of magical organs accumulated in an amusement park is to be kept secret.

“That” Seina averted his gaze from me.

“I'm aware of your level of secrecy, but you came here. What's the point of hiding it here, where there is no magic? If you don't want to do that, you can quit the Weak Knights.”

“Um, ...”

“... .. hmm?”

Seina averted his gaze from me and clammed up. He seemed to be confused about something else rather than refusing to answer my question. And if you look closely, you can see a blush on his cheeks.

“... .. Hmm?”

Could it be? I looked down at my chest.

“Oh, I see.”

Because of the way my upper body was plunged into the narrow opening, my ample and unnecessarily voluminous twin mounds were pressed against the lower part of the opening. In addition, my tank top was caught, and my breasts were on the verge of freedom.

Of course, even I, a simple-minded person, know how young men feel when they see a woman in such a state in front of them in a small cockpit. (I was just warned by Lieutenant Nagato.) But I'm in a position where public gazing is an everyday occurrence. If I go to a party, I'm often exposed to the gaze of greasy, dirty people with their bosoms open. I am not embarrassed by the fact that the young man in front of me is now staring at me at close range. On the contrary, I was relieved to see that this young man was so calm and appropriate for his age.

"... ... The final measurement stage before coming here was rank 19.2."

"19.2!?"

I was momentarily speechless when I heard the ridiculous number that Cadet Seina finally stated. What brought me back to my senses was the transmission from the operator.

"Lieutenant Airen, the rescan does not show any differences from the previous data."

"... ... No differences? But other than that, the cause of the link failure is"

As I came back to myself, I noticed something strange in the process of checking and examining the displayed data. This is something that I probably wouldn't have noticed without a lot of experience.

"Is this a biased type of probability?"

It would also be a negative displacement, and the slightly surprised and awkward look on Cadet Seina's face convinced me that my prediction was correct.

"What did you do during the simulation? Wasn't there supposed to be an effect even then?"

"We were using manual controls for the cadets that could be"

"What?"

I quickly looked at Seina's report card as he replied as if he had given up. I can't say for sure without examining the data, but based on my experience, his probability bias should be quite serious. I quickly activated the customized data of Seina's simulations and found that it was almost completely manual.

"Hey, hey!"

I was more than a little surprised by that fact, but what was more problematic was that the performance level he had maintained as if it was measured around the selection pass line. Of course, an ordinary operator wouldn't notice the anomaly at first glance, but as long as it's combined with other data, there's no doubt about it.

(What are you doing?) I glanced at the Seina's face as if to gauge his intentions. In any simulation situation, it's difficult to maintain a constant score. If this was the result that he intended, then I would have to say that he has reached the level of a veteran. Either way, it was impossible for a trainee soldier who was about to take the test to perform such a trick.

"Oh well."

Now was not the time to speculate on the young man's intentions. I deactivated all the links and started to make minor adjustments.

"If you're a ... rank 19.2, you should be able to have a good life over there, but you don't want to live there?"

"That's not why I'm here, but I wanted to see the rest of the world ..."

I sensed from his tone that there was a reason, so I stopped pursuing the matter further and concentrated on my work.

"... is a lot trickier than I thought."

Link manipulation is a way to integrate the special suit worn with the control of the Weak Knights. It picks up the movements of the operator's body, the biological reactions and thoughts that are trying to move it and performs various operational tasks on the Cavalry. That is exactly how the Weak Knights become the body of the pilot.

"I can only guess from the simulation data, but isn't your probability bias quite abnormal? It should have interfered with your daily life, right?"

"Since I was born with it, I'm used to it."

"... You can't simply say that, can you?"

The young man seemed to be in a state of deep insight.

(Although his reaction to women still seems to be naive ... kukukuku)

To be honest, this is the first time I've ever been face to face with a member of the opposite sex in a small space like this and watched their reactions to my physical body in detail and up close. For a woman who has been unmarried for as long as I have, and who has lost all confidence in her ability to be a woman, the reaction of the young man in front of me was an enjoyable experience that stimulated my self-esteem. At the same time, it's quite fun to break down the young man's self-assured expression.

However, I'm on a mission now. If I don't do something about the Link, the young man's life will be in danger, and more importantly, my precious Weak Knights will be damaged.

“Don't make me take the trouble.”

“I'm sorry.”

The way he turned his head apologetically, he looked like the little dog I had at home. I struggled a bit to suppress my grin and focused my attention on adjusting. If there's a linkage problem, the best way to do it is completely manually. It's an old technique that uses only the control balls of both hands, myoelectricity and some thought, but it's more reliable and not as susceptible to probability bias. The movements are quite limited and require a certain level of skill, but it has the advantage of being able to go out without having to make detailed adjustments, no matter what kind of pilot you are.

(The other move takes time.)

It is also possible to gain comparable power in addition to the detailed links. It's a way to have a specially trained auxiliary AI to assist in behavior. Many veterans choose this method, and some even name the AI and treat it like a woman. Of course, building it would require a long period of actual adjustment, which is impossible at this stage.

“Anyway, I've got it working. It's in almost a manual state, but you do that all the time, so deal with it. If you can't, you'll just be disqualified.”

I managed to get it into a controllable state, but it wasn't satisfactory to me at all. I made a few minor adjustments to try to increase the linkage rate, but it was only a small amount. I don't have any obligation to make this young man an Armored Cavalry pilot. I'd rather have him disqualified than have him destroy my precious Armored Cavalry.

“Understood, sir.”

“Wow, you're full of confidence, aren't you?” I was a little miffed at the smile on the young man's face in front of me, so I turned on the communicator so that all the trainees could hear.

“All right, you inferior cadets! We're going to do a field test now, and anyone who messes up in there will have to clean it up themselves! That's right, you can use the cockpit as a dish to eat your meals!”

“Are you serious?” said a confused voice from the cadets.

“And the idiot who damages my precious Weak Knights is going to marathon ten laps around the perimeter of the base in full ground combat gear. Of course, the only food you'll be eating during that time will be emergency rations!”

They all screamed at the same time. It was loud enough to be heard from the cockpits of the Weak Knights, not through the communicators.

“Lieutenant Airen-dono, the base has a circumference of about five hundred kilometers.”

I don't know who said that, but my addiction explodes at the fearful request. Maybe it was the young man in front of me.

“So what? We're going to work all night to fix the Weak Knights that you guys destroy without thinking. It's not uncommon for us to be forced to repair and maintain them while surviving on emergency rations!”

The base's cafeteria has set hours, and if you miss them, you don't eat. After all, the military is tight-fisted, and the military on a remote planet is not much different from the police. What can be outsourced is left to the private sector to save money.

That's why delivery is not allowed. If there is a special standby mission, the logistics unit will make deliveries, but not to the maintenance department. There is a store on the base, but it sells only luxury items, not lunchboxes or anything to fill your stomach. It is possible to go to the nearest city for a meal, but they have business hours anyway. Delivery is also possible, but due to the nature of the military base, the transfer gate requires advance application, and since it takes time to check, the food will get cold. You can also use the time freezer, but of course you will have to pay a premium for that or order a hundred units.

Instant food is expensive, so I thought about cooking my own food, but then I would have to pay for the ingredients and equipment, and where to cook it would be a problem. The wages for the maintenance team were low, and if they had to spend almost every day like that, the Engel's coefficient would be a sad figure.

“If you guys break the ship and replace too many parts, people will wonder if you're not doing a good job! If it's you, you can get delivery because you're supposed to be on standby for operations, but we can't because we're on regular duty! You'll end up with an unlimited supply of shitty emergency rations!”

Meals in shifts were possible under certain circumstances, but basically, the mission was the priority of the active-duty troops, and the maintenance people had to cover for them. While active-duty units rotate to mealtimes, maintenance is a pre and post mission, so they often miss mealtimes. When a ship is in combat deployment, maintenance is so urgent that there is no time to eat.

In the past, when I raised this issue, I was told that I could eat as many emergency rations as I wanted. However, the emergency ration was seriously bad, as evidenced by the reaction of the cadets. I hated him even more when I found out that the person who proposed the outsourcing was that bastard commander. I can easily imagine him colluding with the contractor and receiving

the margin. I can't tell you how many times I thought about dunking him in the emergency ration tank.

"Look! We're always in a state of punishment!"

"Shh, but when you're ten laps in"

"Without Bio-Enhancement, the normal record is sixty days, five hours, thirty-six minutes and thirty seconds."

"Airen-dono, no matter how much of an officer you are, isn't that a bit arrogant?"

I don't know who it is, but he gives me his opinion in a shaky voice. This just goes to show how much they hate emergency rations.

"All you have to do is not break it. It's that simple, right?"

"....." The cadets were silenced by my righteous argument. But the young man in front of me smiled, confused, but as if he sympathized with my complaint.

"Hmph!"

I pushed my chest into the air again and retreated from the face I was holding close to me so that the young man could see me clearly.

"!"

I quickly removed my gaze and let my cheeks blush a little at the young man.

"So, let's see how you do."

I glared at the young man, pulled out my upper body, and jumped down from the Weak Knight.

"All right, all maintenance personnel, stand down! Activate all Armored Cavalry!"

I stopped a short distance away to check on the situation. In fact, this would be their first hurdle as a Weak Knight operator.

"Lieutenant Airen-dono, confirm activation of all Armored Cavalry!"

It was good to see the fifty cavalry standing up and lining up in an orderly fashion. The irritation I felt earlier is blown away when I see this cool sight.

"All right! All Armored Cavalry move to their positions in order!"

And under my command, the cadets take their first steps.

Gaiin! The first step was taken with a heavy sound, and most of the trainees staggered like babies who have just started walking.

“01, overturned, 03 too.”

The ones that staggered but started to walk were allowed to go, while the ones that completely overturned were kept in place. In their first real cavalry training, the cadets were exposed to the shock of the linked cavalry and their own bodies and went into a state of mild shock.

Of course, with today's technology, it is possible to have them experience this in the simulation stage, but it is difficult to predict what will happen in actual combat. This is one of the aptitude tests to see how resistant you are to such troubles.

“Weak Knights who have reached the predetermined position will move to the second stage!”

The next step after the walk was the driving test, but again, several cavalymen dropped out. However, about thirty of them still managed to control the Weak Knights, and about ten of them were so stable in their movements that it was hard to believe it was their first time.

“Humph! I don't like it.”

They were supposed to be riding Weak Knights for the first time today, but their movements were clearly experienced.

“The bastard commander, a potential minion?”

The first step to getting ahead in life is to be in the good graces of Commander Algurs.

The bastard selects the best candidates from among the new trainees and invites them to a voluntary study session called “Juku”. There, they are given priority to experience simulations containing actual impact data in advance, and retired veterans serve as instructors. In addition, the bastard and the student alumni use their contacts to introduce and train with the most advanced training equipment, which they would not normally have access to. To make matters worse, there are rumors that the budget is being diverted from the military.

*** * * Editor's note: “Juku” is what the Japanese call Cram School. * * ***

Of course, this is not an absolute evil. Training as many elites as possible is good for the future of this planet.

(As long as it's not for personal reasons.)

But in the end, the students are the private army of that bastard. In other words, they are a faction of bastards.

In the first place, there is no reason or budget to maintain so many forces on a rural planet. There is no need to use the Weak Knights to maintain security on the planet, and the best they can do is to fight pirates to maintain shipping routes, and to fight the magical beasts that attack the town

that people can't handle. That's why there are less than a thousand Armored Cavalry on the entire planet. The number of cavalymen, including reservists, is about 4,000, and the number of cavalymen that are replenished annually, including reassignments to the center, wear and tear, and retirements, is about 20. However, those who are chosen for the job have a lot of possibilities.

Cavalrymen with high ability and military service may be recommended for transfer to the Armored Cavalry unit of the central planet Kaou. And cavalrymen with outstanding military service can be Knighted as officers, and even gain a position above the head of state of the local planet.

In order to achieve his goal of “undefeated,” he has chosen not to fight. In other words, he will not fight or accept any final battle or duel. Of course, this is impossible under normal circumstances. If you don't accept the duel, you will lose, but what the bastard is defending is the planet itself. If the planet is completely taken over by the enemy forces, he loses, but no matter how much damage is done, there is no way he can lose unless something goes wrong. And even then, it is on a planet of no strategic importance. Even if the pirates attack a town on the ground and cause a little damage, they will retreat once they are satisfied with the situation. They will not occupy the town and stay there.

The question is whether the rest of the world will accept that. The Armored Cavalry unit is the flower of the military and has absolute say in the military, which means it can even suppress the opinions of base commanders and the government. But no matter the process, their records show that they are undefeated.

“All those cadets collared by that bastard.”

The Weak Knights riding in the distance are the very same virus-contaminated, slightly better-performing cadets that were bought by those bastards. I want to incinerate them when I think of the elite cavalymen who protect our country being turned into the private army of those bastards.

(No matter how good their performance is, they are filth nesting in the noble Weak Knights!)

I want to burn the filth! Of course, not all of them have been prepped at the bastard’s cram school. There were others who managed to keep up with those who were running behind them. And that 013 seems to be one of them.

“Hmm, as expected.”

Although it was in the midst of an unstable and immature group, the natural behavior of 013 was unmatched by the other Weak Knights. At first glance, it looks like a dangerous movement caused by poor piloting skills, but my eyes, which know the Weak Knights well, cannot be deceived. From

the sound of it, I could tell that it was smooth enough not to put too much strain on the Weak Knight. In other words, 013 is just intentionally making it look poorly done. And considering the fact that it's mostly manual operation, it's an amazing skill.

"I don't know what you're up to, but if you're trying not to put too much strain on my precious Weak Knights, I'll let you off Hmm, did you trip?"

Suddenly, 013 stumbled on an empty flat surface. When I quickly zoomed in on the image, I could see some kind of small animal running away.

"You avoided that thing? Still, it's unusual for a small animal to enter this base and for it to cross by the Weak Knights."

Well, as I was about to say, that was unlucky, I remembered that young man's characteristics.

"Kukukuku, I see, probability bias." I laughed. "Hmmm, ... speeding up."

The speed of 013 increased, as if he was getting used to the controls, and it gradually moved to the top of the long line. Perhaps it is to reach the target point within the specified time so that it can move on to the next stage.

"... .. but why do you have to go through all that trouble?"

It's as if he's trying to hide his power. If that's the case, there's only one answer.

"Is it because you don't want to be spotted by a bastard?"

In fact, not a few people dislike the commander. However, that's the same as giving up on your career at this stage. In a worst-case scenario, they will be relegated to the front lines and used as shields by their protégés, so most of them don't show it and carry out their duties without any trouble. Of course, there are rare people with a rebellious spirit who defy the authorities to their face, but in the end, they are just relegated to a quiet position by that bastard.

"Alright! The twenty-six cavalrymen who reached the target point in time will now be transferred to my command for flight training!" The examiner, a veteran cavalryman, signals to us.

That's all I have to do. The rest of the time, I'll be taking care of those who dropped out.

"All right, let's get the dropouts back and recalibrate!" I shouted, letting the Weak Knights who had dropped out of the driving test retrieve them.

The Weak Knights won't break if they're tipped over a bit, but I'll give them a quick maintenance check, readjust the links, and train them from the first stage. There are slow starters everywhere, and this is a remedy for that.

"All cavalry adjustments are complete!"

“Then resume with sequential walking!”

The simulation phase includes a minimum of space combat training, so in a month at the latest, they will be given that level of practical experience, and then their acceptance or rejection and assignment will be decided. However, those who reach the target point during the first stage have the highest chance of becoming the Weak Knights' pilots, while those who follow will have to achieve very high grades to survive.

“Don't give up! On the battlefield, the ones who give up die first!”

Slow starters are not rated very high, but if they don't give up, they can catch up and overtake. Not every time, but there are those who do and pass.

I watched the Weak Knights take off into the sky, beating the asses of the cadets that were in a slightly pessimistic mood.

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The next day, the wobbly cadets managed to get into flight training. By the last day of the recruitment exam, thirty-five people had been disqualified. As I had predicted, all of that bastard's pilots were at the top of the list, and the young man just barely passed.

But it was during the final process, the space combat test that the incident occurred.

“In satellite orbit, heavy tremor detected at 28.229! Confirming hyperspace jump of unknown ship!”

“Based on mass ratio and weight tremor pattern, pirate ship 335 confirmed!” The operator of the central control shouted with a rattling alarm.

“Tsk! You snackers!” I frowned the moment the base broadcast came on. Because those were vultures that came regularly. “But you're out of luck, if you're around 28, even that bastard is as good as”

“Type 3 Scramble! Type 3 scramble!”

“Idiot! There are recruits in that area!”

I frowned at the Type 3 Scramble that had been issued. Halfway between the point where the pirate ship appeared and the predicted planetary entry point, there was a group of recruits taking a simulated combat test in satellite orbit. If that was the case, it would be a good situation for a Type 2 scramble to intercept them.

“What's going on?” I quickly sent a secret message to my friend and informant who was an operator at central control.

“... .., you idiot!” The informant's report was deafening.

“You're in charge here!” I told Lieutenant Nagato and rushed to the emergency gate at the back of the maintenance dock, but the gate to central control was closed. Of course, even my pass was being rejected.

“Lieutenant Airen! Where are you trying to go, sir?”

“Central Control! I'm going to punch that son of a bitch!”

“Don't be ridiculous, we're scrambling! And the gate to central is closed.”

Lieutenant Nagato and a few of the maintenance crew grab my arms to restrain me. Well, it's a natural response, so I don't act violently.

“But why is it that even the direct communication is blocked?”

“It's”

Lieutenant Nagato, who is clinging to my arm, also seems to feel uncomfortable and looks away from me for a moment.

“However, submitting a request to the operational command is an overreaching act! Even if it's Lieutenant Airen, you'll be punished!”

“Don't be silly! Without a doubt, that bastard is using the other candidates to let his protégés escape!”

“You know who's in that brood!”

“I know that!”

In addition to the top-performing students, there are also the children of powerful people such as military leaders and conglomerates. In order to let those people escape, he had the veteran manipulator of the recruits escort them, and then discarded the lower-performing students as pawns.

“Then it's”

“If only that son of a bitch had fought a duel!”

“If the pirates are looking for a snack, it's unlikely that they'll attack the recruits just because they're being used as pawns!”

The target area for the pirates to loot was always the amusement park.

The pirates always target amusement parks, which have local governments and little connection to the central government. They pay taxes, but as they are self-governing, sorties must be

requested. Of course, there is a defense agreement in case of emergency, but the truth is that the military doesn't really want to take them down, or rather they are victims of the "undefeated" goal. The pirates are aware of this, and after they get a certain amount of harvest, they quickly retreat before the army comes back with a heavy hand. That's why it's called "snacking".

However, in this case, the pirates may think that it is more profitable to ransom the children of influential people. Even if I say something, but the enemy are pirates, and we are led by a bastard who has never fought.

Looking at the recruits Weak Knights, it was obvious that they were not officially equipped. And if you look at the Weak Knights with their escorts, anyone with a good intuition will immediately notice.

Of course, as usual, they may choose to snack at the amusement park, but in any case, the danger of the recruits checking the pirates is high. In addition, the recruits who were ordered to intercept the pirates would probably follow the orders and fight back with their poor skills. And if the pirates attacked and wiped them out, the importance of joining the bastard's faction would increase.

"Son of a bitch! If the bastard had fought back properly, he wouldn't have been lambasted so much!"

The pirates attacked quite often, and on a scale that was quite large for pirates, and the accumulated damage was quite large. There are not a lot of pirate attacks on remote planets, but there are still too many. Some of the idiots are defending the bastards and unabashedly spouting that the pirates who come here regularly are claiming their own territory to the other pirates, resulting in less damage.

"It's no use saying that now, is it? Besides, pirates these days sometimes have ridiculously powerful Armored Cavalry. Rumor has it that the Heavenly Knights class has also been spotted, so it's important not to take them too seriously."

"That's insane."

"It's like that on all the outlying planets. The central government can't even get around to us."

But if the rumors were true, then even if the bastard's Armored Cavalry was the best thing on the planet, they could still fall behind. However, there are not many such pirates, and the best they can do is the Aquius Knights class.

And if they lose, it's not as if they will immediately take over the planet. In the first place, for the pirates to do so, they would have to fight with all their might, and if they did, they would have an overwhelming advantage in terms of strength, no matter how remote the planet.

Therefore, the interest of the duel was to avoid the damage that would be caused by the surprise attack and to arrest the pirates. For the pirates, the expected profit from the surprise attack will be obtained intact. If they lose, the bastard's honor will be slightly damaged, and the recruits will be able to return safely.

"What the hell are you doing here? That's what the army is for!"

"Even if Lieutenant Airen were to punch that son of a bitch, it wouldn't be enough to change things. It's only for your own self-gratification."

"!!!" I glared at Lieutenant Nagato, but to my chagrin, she was right.

"Besides, if the enemy's attention is drawn to the test takers, that may take up more time and reduce the damage on the ground."

"By using the test takers as human shields?"

"They're soldiers, sir."

"That's why you have veterans who can move and dispose of new recruits? Don't you think it's shameful?"

"Orders from the top are absolute, sir!"

The looting victims in the ground war are civilians. If we can reduce that damage even by one person, it will be enough of an excuse, even if the recruits who were made into an excuse are wiped out. Either way, the command is in the hands of that bastard.

"Also, if you're thinking of sacrificing yourself, then it's useless."

Even though the bastard wants to use me as a foil, it's only a bonus. After all, the most important requirement for a Knighthood is to be undefeated. I'm not going to say that I don't like it, but I do like it.

"... .. Damn it!" For some reason, the image of that young man popped into my mind.

Maybe it was because he was the only cadet I had direct contact with, or maybe it was because he was unique, but he was quite impressive. And the way he looked at my body, embarrassed in a way that was appropriate for his age, made me feel even younger, which made me feel even more resentful.

The scramble cavalry launched one after another at a tremendous pace.

"That's pretty good for time."

"Yes, it is."

The quicker-than-usual launch was probably to protect some of the recruits who were evacuating, but it was not bad for a sortie in such a short time. If this is our true strength, it is proof that we are functioning as an army, and it is also proof of our unflagging daily training.

“That's a fact I'm proud of as head of the maintenance team. I want each of you chiefs to bring him some food.”

“Understood, sir.”

“Well, ...”

Once the scramble cavalry was launched, the maintenance team's combat deployment would be lowered by one level. It also loosened the grip of Lieutenant Nagato and the others who had grabbed me.

“I'm still going to punch that son of a bitch.”

Once the scramble launch was complete, it would be a little while before the chase team could launch. If I leave my post on an errand, it will not be a violation of my orders and I will not be subject to punishment, so Lieutenant Nagato said simply. “... .. Copy that, good luck.”

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“What do you mean?”

The direct gate was locked down, so I took a very long detour to the central control. I was not restrained as I had expected, and what I saw when I entered the room, feeling a little out of sorts, was about fifty staff and operators staring appalled at the monitor showing the war situation, and also a dumb bastard who was showing an even dumber face than usual.

“Battle ..., no, you're having a duel?”

But when I looked at the monitor, I was instantly drawn to the scene, as were the others around me. There, a single Weak Knight was engaged in a battle with a top-ranked pirate Armored Cavalry. What's more, that top model looked familiar.

“That's Uzushio ... Aquius Knights.”

I don't know where he got it, but it's an Armored Cavalry of the Aquius Knights class, equipped with cadets for space battles on the normal type of Kasen central army specification. Of course, it's not something that a pirate should have.

The pilot has not received orthodox martial arts training, but there is no doubt that he is quite a performer. However, Weak Knights are overwhelmed against it.

“What's going on? What's going on?” I came to my senses and quickly approached a familiar operator who was close at hand.

“Yes, that's the 013 cadet.” The operator was staring at the monitor and showed me a fast-paced video of the situation after that bastard fucking idiot had turned some of the recruits into an excuse.

“.....”

It was just stunning. I could see why they were all staring silently.

The situation was as follows:

First of all, the 013 Weak Knight had gathered the remaining recruits and instructed them to do something, flew out alone and used the debris that had not been recovered in the satellite orbit to disrupt the enemy Weak Knights' mobility. Then, other recruits opened fire from the rear, and one of the shots hit a mine that seemed to have been left behind by a sunk battleship in the past and began to repeatedly cause violent induced explosions. While the enemy was moving left and right, 013 was avoiding debris obstacles and destroying the enemy individually with impressive maneuvers that made me fall in love with him.

“Seriously, ... that guy, so much”

The young man, Cadet Seina, had been hiding his abilities, which was to be expected, but this was still too abnormal. After all, pirates have a lot of experience fighting in space. In other words, many of them are more used to fighting than the regular army. It's as if you're watching a drama with just the supportive shooting of a childish friend's army.

“... .. I'm going to get really wet.” I muttered to myself. However, there was no way that I wouldn't be burning up at the sight of such an exhilarating battle that seemed to release all my frustration.

And with the enemy Weak Knights in a state of total silence, Cadet Seina sent out a signal for a duel towards the enemy battleship.

“Hahaha, I'm sure that side will take it. They have too.”

If they had been beaten to this extent by a single Weak Knight, it would be shameful for them to throw in any more forces. Rather, the pirates may have been excited by the appearance of 013 Weak Knight, and it can be seen that they were happy to jump out after accepting the duel with two replies.

“... .., so, it connects to this flow?”

“Actually, when the 013 Weak Knight called for a duel, Commander Algurs was in a hurry to give the order to retreat.”

“Are you insane? How dare that idiot interfere with the flow of the game, is he a virgin, he has no balls?”

“As expected, everyone here was staring at me like that.”

If there was anyone in Renza who would dare to make a scene in this situation, it would only be a fool who was inconvenienced by the situation and could not read the atmosphere. Even if they are afraid of the bastard's power, or even if they have benefited greatly from him, the fact that they rejected the bastard who put a damper on this situation is proof of that.

“Kukku ... I see. So that's why you're turning red like you've been boiled.”

A glance at the fucking idiot who is glaring at the monitor with great dissatisfaction, and quickly returns to the monitor. He completely lost the desire to hit another shot. Rather, it doesn't matter if it doesn't go down like that.

“But is it too bad for Aquius Knights?”

The defensive power and firepower of the two-ranked cavalry are very different. At this stage, it seems that he is doing something with speed avoidance and excellent shooting due to its light weight.

“Even so, he's used to fighting ... no, I feel like he's used to avoiding it.”

The Weak Knights' piloting skills are excellent, but there are still some rough edges due to manual operation. The Weak Knights are deployed in the provinces, and the training cavalry is a very old type of cavalry used for examinations, so its performance is low. What makes up for this is the skill with which they construct their battles and, above all, their unparalleled ability to avoid crises.

It's a good thing that I've been able to adjust and maintain it, but it's hard to overlook the difference in performance against a top-tier Armored Cavalry when it's a few generations old. The fact that he is able to compete on even terms with the Armored Cavalry shows just how skilled Cadet Seina is.

(... No way, that guy does magic?)

There is one secret to piloting an Armored Cavalry. It is a link-enhancing technology known only to some members of Renza's royal family, but there is no way that a single recruit would know about it. However, Seina's piloting skills are too extraordinary. In addition, his magical element reserves are abnormally high.

“You're guiding it into the debris.”

“... ... Ah.” I returned my attention to the battle and gave a small affirmation to the operator's murmur.

In the presence of obstacles, the mobility of the enemy Aquius Knights is visibly reduced, and their attacks are diffused by hitting obstacles. Moreover, the Armored Cavalry of Cadet Seina is like fish that have gained water, and they move more vividly in obstacles. As a result, the overwhelming difference in cavalry performance between Weak Knights and Aquius Knights has been narrowed.

However, the difference between the attack power of Weak Knights and the defense power of the enemy is insignificant, and no matter how many shots you hit, the enemy Aquius Knights will not be incapacitated.

“..... Ah, so that's the objective.”

I noticed that the weapon of the 013 Weak Knight had somehow been changed. It was a large, high-powered rifle that the enemy Weak Knights had. In other words, the objective was to recover the weapons of the enemy Weak Knights they had defeated in the debris.

“Or did you read this situation and leave it here?”

By the time the enemy Aquius Knights realized this, the game was over. Damaged by the firing of its high-powered large rifle, the enemy Aquius Knights finally gave the signal to give up.

“Yah what!”

A cheer went up in central control, but the battle wasn't over yet.

Some of the pirates were sometimes dissatisfied with the duel and continued to fight afterwards. This was especially true of the pirates who had come from the Galactic Federation side. And recently, with the destruction of the Federation's giant Guild, the number of pirates coming from there has been increasing.

“Tactless!”

“Scramble team, cover 013!”

At the same time I shouted, the tactical operator scrambled to launch and ordered the troops who were trying to protect the evacuated recruits to rush to the scene. But it was the fucking asshole who interrupted him.

“Wait! Protecting the evacuated recruits is the top priority, and while 013 is in the middle of it, order the recruits who are providing on-site support to withdraw as well!”

“Don't be silly!”

“Lieutenant Airen, look!”

The operator's voice stopped me as I was about to rush over to the fucking idiot. I huffed and turned towards the monitor to see the 013 Weak Knight charging towards the attacking pirate battleship.

“This is reckless!”

But the 013 Weak Knight dodged the rain of bullets and approached the pirate battleship with a speed that clearly exceeded the Weak Knights' capabilities.

“... .. That's it!”

I finally realized that the backpack of the 013 Weak Knight had been replaced when I saw it.

“Enemy, it looks like the Aquius Knights gave it to 013.”

“Oh, so the Aquius Knights' pilot was a cavalryman.”

No doubt the Aquius Knights' manipulator was angry that his own duel had been tainted.

“So, it must come to that!”

The 013 Weak Knight did not fire back at all, but concentrated on evading and dodging the enemy's barrage, finally entering the pirate battleship's firing blind spot point. Then, he thrust his large rifle at the main bridge.

“Haha ahahahaha!”

At that moment, my elation reached its peak. Of course, everyone in the room except the fucking idiot probably felt the same way. Even the two mistress PR officers were watching the monitor with cheeks dyed and eyes glued to the screen.

(You can fuck me when you get back.) I said in my mind. I had the good sense not to say it aloud, and I was also a little embarrassed because I wasn't sure if I could get a husband.

However, if you think about it objectively, I'm a delinquent princess without a husband, but I'm still royalty and a virgin. (I guess I'm worth something.)

But I really don't know what to think about this. If Lieutenant Nagato had been by my side, I would have asked her immediately. Rather, I was inexplicably drawn to the young man.

“We're receiving a surrender signal!”

The pirate battleship immediately sent a signal to surrender. Well, if he could stick his rifle on the bridge, it was checkmate. The head of the pirates who let the battle continue may have given up,

or their men may have rebelled... well, judging from the way the pirates sent a surrender signal to Cadet Seina with a call of praise, it was probably a rebellion pattern.

After that, the pirate battleship was captured by the following troops and led back to the base. And with it came the return of a new hero.

× × ×

“That's awesome.”

Most of the available men on the base had gathered to celebrate the hero's return. Everyone's faces were bright and uplifted, a fervor that showed how many of them had been frustrated by that bastard.

When the 013 Weak Knight landed on the main taxiway near the central control tower, he was greeted with a salute. And as soon as the young man, Cadet Seina, showed his face, cheers and applause erupted from the surroundings.

“Hmph.”

But the limp dick bastard was alone, staring at it with a cold expression.

(He's a small man in many ways.)

Although he didn't say it, everyone around him must have felt the same way, including me. However, it wasn't enough to dampen the enthusiasm of the hero's return. It seems that those who shy away from the sentiments of bastards don't come to this place and stay in the base to avoid trouble.

“You seem to be in a good mood, but what you've done has deviated from my orders. Be prepared for an inquest and a military trial.”

While the people around him were looking at his actions coldly, the way he folded his arms and put up his best pretense was pathetic. He looked like a pompous thug.

“Commander Algurs.”

“If it's an excuse, I'll hear it at the hearing. Get him out of here!”

Seina on the other hand, had plenty of room to maneuver. As if irritated by the atmosphere, he shouted, “I challenge you to a duel.”

The moment Seina declared that I no, I fell in love with him.

Chapter Two: The Boring Trip from Racepshi to Renza

After being kidnapped by Hakuren, Seina was on the Racepshi which was traveling through hyperspace towards Renza. Although the Kamidake and Kiriko and the rest of the girls were also aboard, he was unable to contact them and didn't know where they were.

Seina was worried about Fuku most of all. She had recently been through a lot of hard situations. But he was glad that she now had Acha. Lately the two had begun to remind him a lot of Ryo-Ohki and Sasami.

"I wonder what's going on ... Hakuren and her girls were so desperate to get me here... but now they've ran off and left me alone."

A call monitor came up with a chime. He answered it. Maya, the dance princess of Racepshi was on the screen. "Mr. Seina, I have an incoming call for you from Airi would you like to take it?"

"Yes!" Immediately Airi was displayed on the monitor.

"Howdy! You seem to be doing well Seina." Airi smiled, making light of the situation.

"Airi what took you so long?! Why didn't you call me sooner?"

"Sorry, I had a lot of debriefing and paperwork I had to do on the incident. But it's not like I would've been able to do anything. Thanks to Hakuren, you're on a train through frontier space on the Racepshi. There's nothing I can do for you."

"Well ... that's true ... but still..." Seina really just wanted to complain for a bit.

"Getting them to let the Kamidake and the girls on board was trouble enough as it is."

The girls were all VIPs and the Kamidake was a top-secret ship. She didn't want them thinking this was some kind of planned inter-federation invasion of Renza. Of course, if Airi had done nothing they would have been fine aboard the ship, but they would never be able to leave it when Seina got off.

"Even if I'm able to negotiate their passage into Renza, it's not going to be easy. It will take time since we have no diplomatic relations with them at all. Please don't do anything to jeopardize that. For now, the girls and the Kamidake will have to keep a low profile too while on Racepshi."

"What will become of me?"

"That's up to Hakuren ... she probably wants to use you to rid Renza of pirates. If I were you, I'd go out and have a drink while you still can."

"Let me guess ... now's the part where you come in and tell me you're on board and want me to have drinks with you?"

"Hohoho, this is a bit too serious of a situation for that now don't you think?" Mikami said, pushing Airi out of the way since she had recently become the GP Chief Commander. Seina was actually far more excited to see her than Airi. "I know this has been very confusing for you, but you'll be glad to know that you are now officially assigned on a special mission!"

"A special mission?"

"I know it's inconvenient, but we have to handle your kidnapping carefully. We don't want to start any trouble with Renza."

"Oh, I see."

"So, we've fudged the truth a bit about the kidnapping. You'll be under my direct supervision from now on. You'll be getting a letter briefing you on everything soon, but for now just know this is officially being treated as a dispatch mission on behalf of the GP, Airi Masaki of the academy, Washu Hakubi, and the head of the Juraian Masaki family, Funaho."

"So ... this is a business trip now is what you're saying..."

"Yes, and as such you will be paid through Racepshi, you can convert your money once you get there but be aware the fees are not cheap so you may want to keep some unconverted just in case."

"I understand... but ... uhm... what about Kiriko and the Kamidake?"

"I can explain that." Seto came on screen, she seemed tired. Seina figured she must be the original one, he had been trying to find a way to differentiate her and the mirror.

"The girls are all invited guests too, but the Kamidake ... well ... it is going to have to remain a secret. I don't want to startle them and cause a war. As long as you're with Hakuren though you should be fine."

"Ohoho ... are you sure those girls didn't just kidnap him to get away from their overbearing boss?"

"chh Ringo has set aside two years of paid vacation for them because those girls never take a damn break. It's not my fault! Hopefully she can learn to stretch to stay for twice that since their pay has been cut in half for this ordeal ... nothing I can do about that, I'm afraid it's just procedure."

In other words, Hakuren and her girls had been conveniently given a 2-year grace period to get this over with and come back.

"Hmpf, anyways ... that's all I have to say ... ask that traitor behind you what's going on if you want more details."

Seto cut the transmission leaving Airi and Mikami on the line, they waved goodbye and ended the call.

"That traitor behind me?"

"How awful! I'm not a traitor." Seina heard from behind him, he turned around. "I just came along for the ride" ♥



"Ku! Kuisu Panta why are you here!"

Kuisu came up behind him and locked her arms around him

"How did you get in my bedroom!?"

"Come ... let's sit and talk."

Seina tried to go sit on the one-person sofa in the room, but she took him and sat him down in a chaise lounge.

"Here ♥" It was still better than her taking him to the bed he figured. Kuisu took a cup of tea from a serving drone that passed by.

"Doesn't this remind you of when you first came into space?"

"A bit ... in the sense that I've been suddenly thrust into a setting I never thought possible."

"Then you should sit back and enjoy this. There are only a few people who ever get to

see both the Galactic Federation and Renza, even if they come here by Racepshi, they just get to look outside from here. It's the same seeing it in pictures, but you'll actually get to go there."

"It seems like the concept of borders for me is constantly changing, isn't it?"

"Yes ... it certainly does ... at any rate please don't be too mad with those girls, they were only doing what they thought was right. Think of it as a tough lesson."

"That's one way to look at it ... did Seto tell you to say that? Honestly, I'm just confused ... but that's normal for me."

"Hehe no, this time it's from me. But you can think of this as an exam from us. Seina, you are rare and valuable and important for this world, and you have become much more influential than we anticipated, and of course you've become important to me as an individual too." Kuisu pulled

herself onto Seina's arm. She gave off the air of a mature older seductress, compared to her allure, Kiriko and Gyokuren were still just girls.

"... But Seina, you're still immature. You lack experience in protecting yourself from those who desire to harness your value for themselves. Your power far outreaches your age and since you bear so much military force, individuals are desperate to use you, and while there are those who would rather see you sheltered from having to develop those skills, I think it's best you do it quickly."

"Is that why Kiriko wanted me to stay on the earth?"

"Well maybe ... I wish I could have created a situation that would have allowed us to slowly wait for your growth, but your presence has accelerated the flow of the world to such an extent that we could have never imagined. In that sense I'm the one who has bad luck."

"Ha ha well, that's just usual for me."

"If you had stayed in the Galactic Federation, Jurai would have been able to get the Academy to do your follow up exam early, but it's impossible now since you are in Renza."

"Follow up Exam, what is that?"

"Show me what you can do here Seina. Please show me what you can do in the absence of our asylum. If you can demonstrate it here, you will have achieved "Graduation" with only your own knowledge and abilities. Please ... do your best."

"My knowledge and abilities" Seina thought about it. "By the way, I heard that Ms. Hakuren and the rest of them are being treated as being on paid vacation."

"We knew the purpose of Hakuren and her girls since the moment they arrived. The royal family didn't care about such a trivial thing, but now it's impossible to overlook Seto's position in this. They were her subordinates. Because of Hakuren's flashy way of kidnapping you, far too many people know about it to suppress it. The act of kidnapping you, one of the backbones of the Galactic Federation, is a betrayal no matter how you slice it. So, for the sake of revising history, she has been put down as being on a paid vacation. The Jurai internal affairs section is convinced that, and as for outsiders, it's the easiest way to convince them of that too."

There were many people who saw it go down, but they were also drinking when it happened.

"Oh, so you just don't want to be seen as a traitor too."

"I didn't feel like sticking around ... in case it didn't work out."

"It's interesting what goes on behind the scenes. But if one of you were to go ... shouldn't it be you not the original?"

"... Well, that is how it's supposed to go ... but ... well ... it all worked out in the end, so ..."

Regardless of who remained the other would still be in danger... but he now understood Seto's angry expression.

"Anyway, it's not like she needs me to save her. But I'd be screwed ... I'd rather be stuck with you, Seina. But thankfully, since I'm here I can help you out."

"So, you'll be helping me while I stay here?"

"Yes, unfortunately it will be a while before you can see Kiriko-chan and the other girls again. In a way this is their exam as well as yours."

"Oh, is that so?"

"Yes, a bit of advice. Your situation in the future will be complicated, the boundaries between ally and enemies, including me, will be very ambiguous, so please doubt me while trusting me. As long as you are alive, be sure to protect yourself first, make sure you do things not for someone else but for yourself" Kuisu slowly rose from Seina.

"Take care Kuisu." Seina smiled.

"Have fun." Kuisu disappeared out of the room.

"So, what did they say?"

"Waaaaa!" A monitor with Maya displayed suddenly launched as if she had been watching him and watching. Her timing was no doubt intentional.

"I have an important story to tell you about the future. I am sorry, I have to tell you in person, can you come here?"

"... Alright, see you in a while." Seina got up quickly.

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"That fucking hag!" Amane muttered in a luxurious room.

Of course, the rest of the girls were there in the same outfits they were in during the wedding. Fuku was eating snacks, D was busy checking out Racepshi's curry menu.

The girls were VIP Guests in Racepshi's fanciest hotel. Of course, it was isolated from Seina, and the distance between them was about half a planet.

"What is she thinking?! That old hag must've been planning for this to happen from the start!" Amane angrily drank some soothing herbal tea. After they made it onto Racepshi, she went to chase after Hakuren and was restrained by pretty dancers as soon she jumped out of the Kamidake. They were thrown in here like prisoners. Unlike Seina, they had no means of transportation, and where unable to go out of the Racepshi into space, they'd finally gotten in touch with Seto, but were told less than Seina was and so Amane was very angry.

“No doubt that they knew the identity of Hakuren's group. But they couldn't have had any idea that they would kidnap Seina during the wedding.”

“What's the difference?! They never should have been attached as Seina's escorts!”

“Regardless, we're stuck on the Racepshi now, although Seina-oniichan and ZINV are a different story.” Neiju said.

Seina was the master of 'ZINV', one of the two ancestors of the humanoid weapons of the Renza Federation, so it was fine for him to fly it in the Renza Federation. They went together like duck and green onions. But Seina was the onion and ZINV was the duck.

“It seems that Renza informally requested that ZINV to be handed over to them before.”

“Wait! So, you're saying that if he had gone after them on ZINV we wouldn't be stuck here?” Miki was also angrily drinking herbal tea. Of course, her body now had the same level of biological defense functions as Fuku, tea did nothing pharmacologically speaking but its fragrant scent and taste calmed her. Also, Miki felt, “Well, it's free so why not!?”

“Taking that thing out on a rampage chase after the Racepshi itself would have been a problem.” Kiriko quietly said, she was on her fifth herbal tea.

“You say that so calmly ... but you're sure slamming back tea.”

“Miki you're a graduate of the GP Academy, you know I'm right.”

“Don't you trust Hakuren, Amane, why are you angry?”

“I'm mad at that old hag not her. Either way, it's going to be a pain in the ass for us to find Seina here ... and the Kamidake is useless to us. Oh well ... I guess we should be patient and just enjoy this place, it's an entertainment planet, let's have fun.”

“Hahaha ... I would, but I am afraid of getting used to luxury!” Miki said, because she was funded by her father.

“I agree ... It's a horrible trap to fall into.” Kiriko also didn't want to because she was afraid of Seina's bias making something bad happen with the money.

“I'd rather enjoy sightseeing Racepshi on my honeymoon ...”

“chh ... They better not lay a finger on him ... Those hussies!” Amane clenched her fist in anger.

“Don't you trust them?”

“Not in that area!”

Even though Seina's body was safe, his chastity was not guaranteed.

“IF THEY DO THAT, I'LL KILL THEM!” Kiriko said with radiant murderous intent.

Acha and Fuku were eating sweets, and D was crazy about curry, so they didn't seem to notice. However, the others were terrified by this.

Knock knock. The door opened and Makihi bowed and came in. "Is there anything I can help you with? Oh, did I come at a bad time? You're going to have to keep your temper in check here miss. Hide everything under the mask of a smile, that is our motto here the on Racepshi."

"Ahahahahaha. Oh no, Kiriko here is just acting out a play ... pay her no mind."

"It's not an act!"

"... Oh... is she is a stage performer, what's the role?" Makihi knew it wasn't but wouldn't have hesitated to make Kiriko a spectacle for the guests.

"It's not an act!"

"Damn ... are you sure about that?"

"We have everything we need ma'am. You can leave." Neiju interjected to try to end the derailed conversation.

"If you like we have a stage you can practice on."

"I want to beat the guy who is writing the script."

"It seems to me like there is no script. It's a scenario-free drama and dare I say, isn't Mr. Yamada's probability bias the director?" Makihi said, Kiriko breathed a big sigh.

"... Can you at least explain the situation to us?"

"Of course I can." Makihi said.

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They moved their conversation to the veranda.

"Ok, first off, who are Hakuren and the other three?" That was the question that Kiriko had always wanted to ask. Of course, she had some guesses, but there were still some things that she didn't understand.

"As you've probably guessed, Kiriko, they aren't just secret agents from Renza."

"So, they're people in high positions over there?"

"Yes, the Renza Federation is largely divided into five groups: Hakuren-sama's country, Karen-sama's country, Suiren-sama's country, Gyokuren-sama's country, and the Kaou family's Commonwealth. Each country has a royal family, they are all in a political stale-mate with each other or have an alliance."

"There are only five countries?"

“Wait, so are they”

“Ms. Hakuren is the first princess of the Kihaku (Amber Cavalry) Kingdom; her real name is Lady Shirohana Renne Kihaku.

*** * * Translators’ note: Google translates: 白花 ▪ 蓮音 ▪ 騎珀 White Flower, Lotus root, amber cavalry * * ***

“Oh, she's royalty!? And in the direct line of succession?” Kiriko was surprised. She had guessed that they came from a noble family from their gossip, but she hadn't imagined they would be so high up in the ranks.

“Ms. Karen is the 3rd daughter of the First Prince of the Kasen (Fire Spring) Kingdom, Lady Shien Rengoku Kasen (**Glowing wings, brick, Brigade, fire spring**). Ms. Suiren is the Fifth Princess of the King of the Suire (Green Spirit) Kingdom. Lady Minamo Rensou Suire, the one you know as Gyokuren is the only one who is a Queen ... or at least she should have been crowned one.”

“No way! Gyokuren is a Queen?”

“To be precise, she is the King's Thirteenth Princess.”

“The first child doesn't inherit the throne?”

“That country has a somewhat ... special inheritance system” Makihi said, Kiriko felt there was an amusing story behind that she wasn't telling her.

*** * * Translators’ note: -----13 is unlucky...----- * * ***

“Special hmm ... so why hasn't she been crowned?” Amane asked. Kiriko and others nodded.

Amane wondered if it was due to the thing that had caused Gyokuren's urge to attack Seina that she had demonstrated before (**GXP 5**).

“At this stage, although she hasn't been crowned yet, it's been decided that she has inherited the throne, although in principle her status was abandoned when she left for the Galactic Federation.”

“Why?”

“I don't know, her real name is 心珠 Shinjyu 蓮鎖 Rensa 磨玉 Magiyoku (**heart jewel, lotus chains, polished jewels**) if crowned she will inherit the name last of Masui 磨水 (**Polished Water**).”

“I expected something like that, but never that one of them would be a queen!”

“Why doesn't she act like one?”

“Shit I'm not going to touch that subject with a 10-foot pole.”

"Even so, it's a brave story that 3 princesses and a future queen left to infiltrate the Galactic Federation by themselves."

"I wonder if someone put them up to it."

"It was definitely Hakuren's own doing."

"But wouldn't that put their positions in jeopardy?"

"There's no doubt that it was a violation of their orders, they left without permission."

"Yeah, and you helped them do it."

"Shit, we just took them aboard as guests for an extended stay, we didn't know what they were doing during it. We're Racepshi, a social place for ladies and gentlemen to have fun."

In other words, space Vegas, and they didn't give a shit what people did as long as they weren't causing problems. **(What happens in Racepshi, stays in Racepshi!)**

"Well, are you willing to do anything about this? You're responsible after all!"

"Of course, we will, but not at our own risk. If we let you travel out of here it would cause a massive uproar." A large screen was launched showing a tremendous number of spacecraft running around Racepshi. "Currently, Racepshi has five port sections, filled with many leading aristocrats, large companies, and other ships ... You can't help but stick out. The Kamidake has a special shape."

As soon as they went out people would panic just from the energy to mass ration it emitted.

"Are we being detained ... Or arrested."

"No. No. We're neutral, Racepshi is an extraterritorial ship. As I mentioned earlier, we can't have any trouble here."

"In other words, do you mean to say you're not willing to stop the princesses from making a triumphant return?"

"Some forces are beyond our control."

"... How annoying ... then why did you let Hakuren get to the Federation in the first place? You can't help us, but you coming to the Galactic Federation on a smuggling mission is ok? Now thanks to you, we're being deprived of Seina, because of his anti-pirate abilities."

"But they went there before he even went into space!"

"What would they have done in Jurai if he hadn't shown up?"

"Just what you'd expect."

"A Royal Tree? I don't know if that's bold or reckless ... They'd have to spend centuries just trying to get into the royal family to get one..."

"So, you knew that was impossible and had no reason to not let Hakuren come aboard ... but you didn't think it was odd they had no escorts or anyone else with them?"

"Renza has military organizations centered in each of the five nations although they're working together, they don't have a wide-reaching organization that can cover the whole area like the GP."

"Hmmm, I can see how that could be a problem for fighting pirates..."

"Yes, it's a problem. But there was no immediate urgency to fix it."

"What, why?"

"Like Amane said. Hakuren-sama had a long-term plan. Royal Trees are not an easy thing to get and that was their original objective."

"Jeeze ... hiding your identity, and pretending to be a normal citizen, and trying to become royalty, it wasn't impossible, but it was certainly a plan with a probability of working that was close to zero."

"Well, there are people like Noike and Mashisu, so it makes sense they went to work under Seto."

"Even then, they'd have to successfully build up their list of achievements and live in Jurai and that would take hundreds of years ... Oh, that's it!" Kiriko glared at Makihi, and Makihi smiled to respond.

In other words, it didn't matter if they let them in or not as long as Seto knew. Their plan had failed the moment Hakuren came to Racepsi, and once they went to Seto it was done. But Hakuren herself probably didn't know that.

"That fucking old hag had them dancing in the palm of her hand!" Amane said angrily.

"Seto was going to get around to helping, but not for a while. Seina's finding ZINV must have caused Hakuren to accelerate her plans." It was a 1st generation tree after all.

"Unfortunately, it seems like the situation over there has gotten worse much quicker than they expected. So their actions weren't in vain. It seems a lot of pirates have fled the Galaxy Federation for Renza and there has been an increasing amount of giant pirate owned Heavenly class humanoid weapons."

"Heavenly class?"

"It's the name of a class of the humanoid weapon. The class name changes with body height and energy output, the ranks are roughly..."

軽騎 Weak Knights (Keiki)

地騎 Earthly Knights (Chiki)

水騎 Aquius Knights (Mizuki)

天騎 Heavenly Knights (Tenki)

Normally there were 4 classes. Seina's ZINV, although it was a Heavenly class in terms of size, it would be called a 神騎 Godly Knight (Kamiki) because of its total strength.”

“I heard rumors that in Renza, large-scale humanoid weapons such as ZINV were normal, but since we had no diplomatic relations with Renza, we didn't know the details of it.”

“Even as a pirate I didn't get much information on it from our side. The pirates on the Galactic Federation side were never interested in humanoid weapons in the first place.” Ryoko Balta said.

“They're inefficient and unpractical. Why are they the norm there? Kiriko, you've seen how they'd operate, don't you understand?” Amane asked, referring to the Mech TV shows that they had watched when they went to Seina's home.

“Even on Earth we think they're cool looking, but don't try to make them because they're impractical.”

“Humanoid weapons, especially gigantic weapons are treated as symbolic beings, humanoid infantry soldiers are called ‘Armored Cavalry’”.

“Symbolic existence ... so I was right, the humanoid weapons popularity is unnatural, but if it it's a symbolic thing, It makes sense...”

For example, costumes and the like are more important in appearance than in terms of functions, costumes for ceremonial occasions are a good example. Many of those can't be said to be very practical.

“Is it a religious thing?”

“Well, the humanoid weapons in Renza are believed to have originated from the prehistoric civilization itself, thanks to the info we now know from ZINV-sama and D-san's discovery, it has become absolute faith recently. Thirty thousand years ago they were found in the ruins of an ancient prehistoric civilization in a wide-open area where many humanoid weapons were discovered, along with it they found gigantic weapons known as ‘the Original Five Holy Knights’ and 5 Royal Tree seeds”

“Royal Tree seeds?”

“Now it's not surprising that ZINV exists, but ... do the 5 countries have anything to do with that?”

“Yes, those who became the masters of the five third-generation trees and those who piloted the “the Original Five Holy Knights” became the Founders of each royal family. They are known as the Five Heroes who built the foundation of Renza. The name Kamiki or Godly Knight is only used to refer to the original five Holy Knights, and now the third-generation tree seeds are located in

the capital with each royal family's nation where they serve to give birth to next generation of trees.”

“So the 3rd generation is the highest level they have? ... Well, you can still use it as a weapon, but it's not the best idea to do that.”

Jurai's royal ships served only as a deterrent to fighting, and only once before by unknown means had the Shank Guild been able to bypass their defenses and defeat one. They hadn't done well with aggressive fighting in the past, like when the Mikagami first engaged in combat.

“But why then, did Hakuren go to the Galactic Federation? If there are Royal Trees here, there's no reason, right?”

“Wait ... did you say that there were pirates with humanoids of the heavenly class?”

“In other words, Royal Trees are siding with the pirates?”

“More than that, there must be something creating the Royal Trees that are siding with the pirates.”

The distribution of super weapons was frightening. They were like nuclear weapons and were likely to destroy the environment around them as they tried to destroy themselves.

“That's bad, it's worse than what Tarrant was up to. But if they age fix the Royal Trees in the humanoids... how are they reproducing so many of them?”

“The germination rate of the trees depends on the generation, and it increases as the generations increase.”

“The highest level currently in operation is the fourth generation. There are not many used, the fourth-generation trees are almost always used as parent trees that produce the next generation from what I understand.”

“So the main threat is 5th generation trees? ... Well, even a fifth generation, has enough power to run a small scale planetoid battleship in an always battle-ready state.”

“Kiriko, how many generations can be used for battle?”

“If they are ZINV class constructs, perhaps... to the Eighth ... I think it should be effective until the ninth generation, after that there will probably be technical level issues, they could still be used like normal power reactors I guess.”

“Nevertheless, the Heavenly Knights, which are the highest-powered ones, have less than 300 units registered in the whole federation. It's frightening that the pirates are getting their hands on that level of humanoids.”

“That's not a small number. I wonder how they're getting them. Maybe someone on the inside is giving them away.”

“Is it possible that the pirates found another Royal Tree If that was the case, it would make sense that Hakuren would want to take Seina after he became the master of ZINV.”

With a first-generation tree and the Kamidake, large numbers of fifth-generations wouldn't stand a chance.

“Regardless, if Royal Trees are involved, we should gather as much information as possible on this.”

“Well, since the discovery of the first five, they've been searching for the ancestors of those trees. There have been many generations of families who searched, and their exploration records were always popular reading... but now thanks to D, we have a rather detailed record of everything up to the beginning of the prehistoric civilization and in particular the details of the ancestors of the Seiki of Renza, so the search has heated up, but from the records”

“There was another Founder, AHRA right? It was called the next generation mother and it was used to give birth to more second generations, wasn't it?”

*** * * Translators' note: AHRA might be pronounced AHuRA, like Ahura Mazda from Zoroastrianism... like how ZINV is JIN Bu (in Japanese J is also Z). * * ***

Kiriko looked at D who has taking a break after eating curry.

“Yes, but that was in the process of building the civilization that came before the founding of the prehistoric civilization. I don't know what happened to it, and ZINV and I had already fallen asleep in the early days of that, so I don't know what happened after that.”

“It seems that all of the original five found in Renza seemed to have been time-frozen and sealed in the seed state, so AHRA, as well as the other second-generation trees haven't been found. It seems that there were no records of them existing in the ruins. When the first five were found, they were also severely aged, they were ill equipped for battle, their data logs were very lacking because the material the data was stored on had deteriorated, and since they were made for combat in the first place, there was no history related data on them.”

“Well, up until a certain era we didn't use large humanoid weapons. The first one we made was ZINV. We only made it into a humanoid weapon because we crashed on an early civilization planet. We used it to help avoid conflict with the natives, which is to say, we made it into an idol for intimidation purposes so they would see it as a god.”

“Oh!” Everyone concentrated on D. “You made contact with a, early civilization?”

“In our time there was no law prohibiting it. All living things have hostilities and fears about strangers. Moreover, those who occupied the land probably wouldn't have accepted us. In order to do that we used an easy to recognize symbol to force them to. By manipulating their sense of awe, we were able to avoid unnecessary fighting. It was very effective.”

“Oh, so that explains the human shape.”

“In early civilizations, huge statues and natural formations are likely to be viewed as subjects of faith, we figured it would give us the upper hand.”

“In other words, the settlers chose coexistence, not wiping out the indigenous people.”

“Yes, our numbers were small, and we had evolved enough to coexist with other parties.” After that, D did not mention that the same settlers on that planet fought with each other and ended up dividing into two groups who fought each other to the death.

“Oh wow! Who would have guessed that the origins of the large humanoid weapons started in such an unexpected way. But ... D, are you sure there wasn't anyone else with Royal Trees? Because there were five original Holy Night remnants, isn't that odd?”

“Uhm... Kiriko ... how long do the Trees live in the first place?”

“They can reproduce themselves, if there's no damage then... about an eternity, but what happened once you got to that place, D?”

In ZINVs records, there were many facts that could not be immediately announced, which also includes things related to the Royal Trees.

“In the first place, we tried to immigrate to a planet in the early stages of civilization because there was a fight brought about by a big power struggle. I don't know how that struggle was resolved. At the very least that civilization we left collapsed, then, when we finally went back into space again, we didn't find any Royal Trees. Perhaps those like AHRA died in that war, they probably got involved in it.

“.... Kiriko, if the trees are killed in battle ... do they regenerate?”

“It never really happens... but I doubt they would be able to if their opponent was another tree. That's horrible though, it's like making sibling kill each other.”

*** * * Translators' note: We know they can regenerate when they are normally killed thanks to Ryuoh and the original J. * * ***

Kiriko was terribly disgusted when thinking about her ship, Mitsuki doing that. To begin with, the trees hated fighting. It was abominable to her that someone would make them fight each other. She wondered why Tsunami would create two lines of trees if she knew they could end up fighting like that.

“As you said earlier, when you first went back into space, there weren't any other trees, and no sign of AHRA, but those third-generation seeds remained, did you discover them?”

“Yes ... Oh, thank you.” Kiriko laughed a bit as D got distracted by a drone coming in to give her more curry.

“Anyway, Seina is also worried about how to handle things with ZINV, I wonder what Hakuren is planning?”

“If Hakuren's girls can take leading positions in the Renza Federation's governmental meetings everything should be ok. But who knows what will happen at this stage. I'd say for now he's probably safe, wouldn't you?”

With the Kamidake and the second-generation tree fused with it, they had the ability to crash through the country's defenses and rescue Seina and ZINV if they had to. Even if it was as a last resort, after all it would start a war.

“I think I have an idea about what Hakuren is thinking.” Makihi displayed a plane on a huge monitor.

“What's this?”

“The solar system located near the center of the Renza Federation space, there is a planet there called TERA.”

“Tera?”

“It is said that it was the center of the central government of the prehistoric civilization, although there was a theory that it was the origin of the prehistoric civilization. Although the birthplace theory was denied by the discovery of ZINV. But it is the planet where the 'original five' that I mentioned earlier was discovered.”



“I can see how they could think that with those seeds being sealed there.”

“Yes. The kings who became the masters of the ‘original five’ became the grandfathers of the five royal family's and established it as a Holy Land for use as the Renza Federation's main conference space. As the era's passed the scale of its use was expanded and it became a place with educational and research facilities and facilities for the training of security for the multinational forces, their version of the Galaxy Academy.”

There were five large artificial planets around the planet TERA, from which huge facilities grew, making it look like a pentagonal snowflake.

“Although it wasn't able to eliminate the influence that each country had on it like the Galaxy Academy has.”

“So, you think ZINV will be taken there where the governmental talks are done.”

“Yes.”

“Are you planning to return Seina to the Galactic Federation when they're done?”

“They should reach a conclusion by the end of the day.” She didn't answer Kiriko's question. Makihi was staring at the picture of TERA, and it gave her the jitters.

New kanji!

簾座	Renza
白花	Shirohana
蓮音	Renne
騎珀	Kihaku (Amber Cavalry Kingdom)
火泉	Kasen (Fire Spring Kingdom)
翠靈	Suire (Green Spirit Kingdom)
磨水	Masui (Polished Water Kingdom)
心珠	Shinju
磨玉	Magiyoku
光椰面	Minamo
簾颯	Rensou
磨水	Masui
天騎	Heavenly Knights (Tenki)
輕騎	Weak Knights (Keiki)
地騎	Earthly Knights (Chiki)
水騎	Aquius Knights (Mizuki)
天騎	Heavenly Knights (Tenki)
神騎	Godly Knights (Kamiki)
聖騎	Holy Knights (Seiki)
機甲騎	Armored Cavalry
原初の五聖騎	The Original Five Holy Knights

Chapter Three: The Stage of Great Farce

Planet TERA resembled the Earth. But it was considered a holy land and living on it was prohibited. Its natural environment was ideally controlled by artifacts around the planet and so it was every bit as beautiful as one would expect from a Holy Land.

The only artificial building there was a large conference hall where the Renza Federation allies gathered on the smallest continent. Moreover, the facility was built underground so it couldn't be seen from above.

Only facility management staff were stationed there, and it was impossible for the staff to go out. The councilors and attendants of each country came there by transfer gate from the outer satellites.

There were five transfer gates, and trustees and officials came and went using the gate for the state to which they belonged. They wore robes dyed in the color of each of the five families, the hall lead towards a huge cylindrical conference center.



There were 50,000 councilors for each country. The seats were divided into honeycomb blocks. And each appeared from a short-distance transfer gate, the attendants prepared their materials and refreshments, and gathered to chat with each other after preparing for the meeting.

"Can we get this over with, I'm tired of waiting for this farce of meeting to being." Prince Misui Namuwarōru Suire, the 3rd Prince of the Suirei (Green Spirit) Kingdom said as he drank a drink made by mixing fruit liquor with carbonated water.

Two monitors came up beside him.

"It's your duty as a counselor. You should be honored to come here." Prince Rotsuka Akeno Kasen, the 6th Prince of the Kasen (Fire Springs) Kingdom said with a serious look.

"Yes, but we already know what will happen. So I understand his feelings." The young man

on the other monitor was Jitsuki Ren Kihaku, the 10th Prince of the Kihaku (Amber Cavalry) Kingdom.

*** * * Translators' note: Left is Rotuska, center is Misui, Jitsuki is behind Misui. * * ***

Each had the distinctive appearance of their country. They heard a sound similar to a bell.

Cling! Clang!

"It is time for the puppets to do their dance."

10 people in gorgeous robes came out and got on 5 pedestals in the middle of the room. They were the current governmental leaders and their candidates for succession.

"Well then, let this kangaroo court of a meeting begin." Misui said. He stood up and the other councilors all stood up with him. They headed to each pedestal and corrected their posture.

Then DOOON! A big taiko-like drum sounded. Everyone bowed to the pedestal.

"In the name of the top five councilors, we declare this meeting of the Great Council of the Renza Federation shall be started." The chairpersons said. Everyone sat down.

"Well What's on the agenda this time?" asked an elderly man with green hair. He was the King of the Green spirit Kingdom Suiten Hyouka Suire. **Suiren's father.**

"We have no choice but to talk about the obvious matter at hand." The Kaou representative, Ranga Baruwemuru Souka said, remarking on the situation with Seina. She was somewhat different from the rest of the people, her ears were red leaves and her toes looked like twigs, she had half a faery like figure.

"Yes, I suppose you're right." The King of the Fire Spring Nation, Hakuten Mashiro Kasen said. **Karen's father.**

"There's nothing to talk about, ZINV is clearly a Godly Knight and is clearly the founder of our humanoids. He belongs to us regardless of who found him and must be turned over." Machi Kashiyou Kigiyoku said. Unlike the other's he was merely a stand in until Gyokuren took her position. "Now, what about matter of the applications for abandonment inheritance rights?"

"Well, I know I would personally love for that pretty little witch queen to take your place, but I can see why you would be against that Kigiyoku. Ahahahaha!" Enten Shinshu Kasen, a man with brown skin and bright red hair next to the king said.

"What a crude name. Is that your nation's official way of talking about our future queen?"

"I am simply trying to praise you; you're doing such a great job! But the rest of us want our daughters welcomed back as heroes."

"Yes, I agree. Now let's get back to the subject at hand." The others nodded.

"The ship will be held onto by the Kaou nation, its crew will be assigned to two people from each nation." A big applause echoed in approval.

(Geeze this is such a farce) Misui thought.

*** * * Translators' note: I am very unsure about this section. It translated poorly in Google even with the names fixed and honestly, it's just a big mess. Misui seems to be saying it's a farce because none of the representatives actually get to do anything but watch while the kings and their successors decide shit among themselves, so it's a sham government. * * ***

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“Welcome Seina Yamada.”

For Seina who was accustomed to the luxurious hotel on Racepshi, this new place he was brought to was narrow and shabby. It had no decor anywhere and seemed like a behind the stage area.

A giant man who seemed like he could be a professional wrestler stood up from a desk of a simple but heavy construction. His presence also made the room feel even smaller. This was an office, but it felt like a waiting room. Of course, an office needed no decorations to be functional, but it was clear from this room that the way the Racepshi's budgeted on decor for guests was very different from how they budgeted for themselves.

“Seina, this is my father, the General Manager of Racepshi.”

“Hello, I am Ekushito Racepshi.”

“Hello, I am Seina Yamada.” They shook hands. It felt like Seina was having his hand grasped by a strong baseball glove.

“Please sit. Get comfy.”

There was a simple sofa and that was basically it. Although it seemed that the whole wall was a monitor.

“I'm sorry, I know this room is a bit small.”

“Oh, no, I like it. It's calming.”

“I'll come back for you when this is over.” Maya put tea in front of the two, bowed and left.

“I'm glad you came Seina; I want to talk a bit.”

“Uhm, ok ...” Even though Seina was being handled as a guest, he was not sure why the General Manager of the planetary scale facility would take the time to talk to him.

“Have you had sex with my daughter Maya yet?”

“Pfffffffffffffffftttt.... What!?” Seina spit out his tea.

“Hmmm, so you haven't. Well, that's alright. She's still pretty young, perhaps you prefer a seasoned woman? There's no rush, take your time.”

"... I just got married!"

"Yes, and now that you have those four women, it's time to think about the next candidates. I heard your home planet of Earth was monogamous. But as you're aware by now, things are different up here in space."

"Even so, I'm not about to have an affair or start such a relationship. I can't believe you'd encourage me to. You're her father."

"Yes, but our mission is to curate the finest genetic and cultural heritage."

"Curate what now?"

"Through Seto, we have been given much of your cultural information. Like other planets, it seems that political marriage was also once done on the Earth to maintain power."

"That's true, but that was only in special cases."

"And you're not a special case? And I thought you'd be more aware than that..."

"... ... Haha... Well, I guess you're right."

"Marriage strengthens the power structure. In our case, it's the difference between creating dancers with great talents or incompetent one..... I won't back down but won't force you to do anything either. Just be conscious of it, we expect any offspring you may have with our family to be prepared to become dance princesses. Learning the skills and the training and giving them to a successor is the duties all dance princess must uphold."

"Even so, I'm a bit clumsy... and, even if I did think about it, I don't think my descendants would have any artistic talent"

"Are you kidding? Your biased probability is a wonderful qualification and should lead to a mind perfect for it, and if you don't like Maya, you can have her other sisters, or even Makihi. Would you like that?"

"What?! Isn't Makihi your wife!?"

"Makihi has nine children, but only two of them were conceived with me."

".....eh?" Seina had been in space for a few years now, he knew that ethics here were different from on Earth, but he had never heard of such an extreme example like this so far.

"I and Makihi think that it is easier to express ourselves as comrades, partners, rather than as a married couple, moreover we're best friends."

"That is an odd concept for me to consider."

"Well, you should start. Do you think you will be able to stay in your cultural bubble forever?"

“Eh?”

“I hope you don't mind me rambling, but I think what I have to say may be of use to someone in your position.”

“Huh?”

“Culture is a special thing that can only be created by existential people with advanced intelligence, but it is also a mirror of those people in a sense. The main desires of those people, their appetites, their libido. There are all sorts of combinations you can achieve with those factors and as such there are all kinds of diverse cultures.”

“I agree.”

“Well, just like how cooking methods and food ingredients and seasonings preferences vary in the galaxy, there are also a tremendous number of types of sexual norms. However, your appetite is for your own survival. For you, libido is only for maintaining the species and the results it yields, and so you don't see that there is so much more it can lead to than that.”

“But what's the point?” From the point of view of survival and population maintenance, it was just a waste of time and resources.

“Well, for one thing, it is a very useful tool for suppressing conflict. Thanks to you Seina, I got a pretty rare glimpse at a planet's initial culture. On the other hand, I had to read about how various cultural foundations were destroyed by each other.”

“Sometimes cultural destruction can be good what about pirates?”

“Da Ruma, and Tarrant Shank's cultures are completely valid cultures as well.”

“Tarrant's culture being valid!? How can you even call what he does a culture?” Seina got unusually mad in tone. Ekushito remained calm.

“I don't pretend to understand it or think it's valid for me, it's out of my personal preference, but it's certain that it was valid for someone, the only person who probably understands it is Tarrant himself.”

“What about those who died because of him?”

“Culture and expression are inherently wasteful endeavors, things are accepted and rejected as they evolve. When you refuse to do more than the minimum necessary to live, it can easily mean death, but, there is also no need for wasteful things and luxurious things, and therefore, people's way of thinking about culture is diverse, but respecting the culture that is there is important, and it's our mission on Racepsi is to maintain those cultures, so we don't reject any culture.”

“Nevertheless ... I have no regrets about catching Tarrant nor crushing the Da Ruma Guild.”

“Well, if that was your choice Seina, I will not deny the validity of that idea. But can it be said that it was really your choice?”

“Huh?”

“In the first place, the fight against pirates wasn't started by your will now was it, Seina? Seto Kamiki Jurai-sama saw your abilities and decided to use you, and so did Ms. Airi Masaki? And Mikami Kuramitsu And they instilled their values and mores in you. In other words, you are like their tool ... No ...? Do you ever decide your ship's route? Do you ever have a choice in what you do? Do you ever exercise your own will?”

“That's true that I don't, but I chose the possibility of doing what they told me. It was better than any other option I had before that.” He felt he had only one single path to take until he met with Amare, and it was probably a path with a very bad ending.

“But nothing is done because of your decision. ZINV, Kamidake, the ladies who are around you, their influence on you is too strong. It is unusual for individuals to have all the say in all things, but you are completely guided by others.”

Seina's thought about it... it was even because of Hakuren's actions that he was there getting this speech first place.

“Of course, initially even though you had no power in your choices, the choices made for you were mostly in your favor, but now it's not.”

“That's true, but” That was what Kuisu had also been trying to tell him. But honestly Seina hadn't yet thought about it any further yet.

“Even if you choose not to do anything about it in the immediate future, I think that it's about time you think about it, especially because Renza is far more chaotic than the Galactic Federation. Hakuren could easily get you wrapped up in warfare.”

“But I have no basis on which to judge what she's doing.”

“Then here's a question for you, how do you gather information and make your own judgments?”

“What do you want me to do Ekushito?”

“Wow... Jeeze... .. this is the prime example of the evil effects of the GP...”

“Evil effects?”

“The GP is a passive organization dealing with incidents as they happen. Of course, there are positive aspects in crime prevention, but that's generalized towards crime, it's not versatile. For someone like you Seina, who is going to be wrapped up in political situations, you need to learn to exercise good judgment, so what you should do first is judge yourself, find your own purpose and keep it in mind ... I'm telling you this because my family collects cultures. I want to preserve

their diversity. Even though you think other cultures might be incompatible, I want you to see that there may be ways that they are.”

“I guess you’re right.”

“You’re still young, so I understand that you are still pretty quick to think that differences can be immediately rejected even those of your enemies, but you should learn to be more flexible and open to discussion. It can clear up things which are cloudy... and it's also important to have fun.”

“... .. I will try, but it will take time.”

“Seina, in your case, you are going to find that there are often problems where there is not that time you speak of. Oh, but you know... There is one thing you can do right now...”

“What is that?”

“I would like you to have sex with Maya.”

“.....”

“Or one of my other daughters or Makihi... for the first time, I recommend Makihi.”

“No, I'm still married, having relationships with other people ...”

“There is a phrase, ‘Eating a cold meal is a man's shame.’ Anyways, whatever you do, you should negotiate it with your wives.”

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It was three hours later that the result of that meeting was conveyed to Kiriko.

Once again, they gathered on the veranda while listening to Makihi. Fuku and Acha stayed in the living room as usual and enjoyed playing. D was eating curry on the terrace. She was only eating a small plate, but the smell of drifting curry overpowered the smell of the tea they were drinking.

“So, they’re making an anti-pirate unit incorporating Seina?”

“I can't say I'm surprised, that's the same thing that happened with the GP.”

“And unfortunately, their position on the matter is not that strong. So, we begin to operate in the form of a small experimental unit. The Kaou nation seems to be in charge of providing equipment for it.”

They watched as Renza sent a lot of their humanoid weapons to the area around the ship.

“I know they’re here to make sure pirates don't try and attack the ship, but it seems like they are just setting it up so they can capture Seina and take ZINV for themselves if things get bad or take it by force if we don't hand it over.” Neiju said.

“Well, if that happens then we will storm them and get him back.”

"As the owner of Racepshi I can't let you do that. I can't allow you to take any action that will disrupt the peace of my customers." Makihi said.

"But you facilitate a ton of things that do just that!"

"Wow ... for an entertainment planet, Racepshi is a powder keg, and it won't be amusing when it explodes."

"Luckily this is a place where fire is prohibited Still, I'd like to ask serious approval on what my husband discussed with Seina." Makihi said putting gasoline on the fire.

"Seina is not a stallion!"

"Didn't you just undergo a political marriage; I don't think that argument works. Besides, which one of you is going to go first? Is it going to you Kiriko, how about you Miki?"

"What about Tsukiko?"

"Hey! How did my mother's name get dragged into this?"

"I know I'd like to."

"Amane!"

"Miki, why did you go bringing up Tsukiko?"

Makihi watched them bicker... "Ahahaha, how entertaining... Either way, it's dangerous to leave things in this state. You shouldn't prolong this."

"I personally think the situation with Fuku-chan being separated from him is more problematic than us now, isn't it?"

"If this keeps up long enough, we will have to deal with Fuku-sama and Acha-sama being anxious."

"It could be dangerous to keep her from seeing Seina for too long. She could get anxious and take the Kamidake out to see him causing a riot."

"Miki would you be able to do anything about that if it happened?"

"Sorry, but Miki-sama, Kirche-sama, and D aren't allowed to transform into cabbits here." Makihi said.

Miki tried to do it but only ended up wrinkling her eyebrows.

"Ah, I can't transform! Hey, how about you Kirche?"

"I can't transform either."

"But how!?"

"It's an inhibition code that Washu-sama coded in. Please rest assured that when you are at Racepshi, the inhibition code will be active."

"Grrr!" Miki was upset.

"Then ... is there's an inhibitor for Fuku, maybe Washu can lock down Kamidake's functions?"

"Hey Miki, Kirche, do you think can you stop the ship if she tries to move it? What is the extent of the inhibition code?"

"Uhm... let's see... .. I think we may be able to manage it somehow."

"Fuku-chan is still young, so I think if all three of us try we can prevent it."

"Well, if that happens, please do that." Kiriko looked at Makihi.

"And ... just to be safe, we can't approve of relations between you and Seina ... but ..." Kiriko stopped to glance at Amane. "About things with Maya, I'll leave it up to Seina."

Amane nodded to agree.

"I am aware that things with Maya are not going to be hurried either and I won't not force them, but thank you."

"Is that so?" Kiriko watched a monitor with the scenery outside. The extraordinary number of mechs sent by Renza made her realize how serious the discovery of ZINV was to Renza. Kiriko accepted then that the situation of Seto assigning women to Seina would continue to increase.

"... When is Hakuren's experimental unit scheduled to start operation? Since Racepshi is remaining neutral, will we have to move out even though it's her experiment?" Kiriko thought that if Racepshi would maintain neutrality, it wouldn't be possible to house them there. Once the deterrence units left Racepshi, Seina would definitely be out of her reach. Not forever of course, but she didn't want to wait.

"Don't worry. The base of operations will be here on Racepshi."

"But you're neutral"

"Battle in Racepshi and similar acts are forbidden, but there is nothing wrong with using the ship as a base. Many hostages are housed here and many organizations hostile to each other. It is not uncommon to have rooms in the ship used as an office. In the past, pirates may have used some as their base."

"So can we also do other political activities here?"

"As long as there is no conflict with the restrictions, of course the spaces available for rent are limited and the rent is also quite expensive, so it is difficult to use as a base unless it's paid for by someone with a national level budget."

If the situation escalated the operation might go full-scale, then it would be necessary to move the base from Racepshi, so there was no reason to put it here longer.

"In any case, I don't think we will need to rent for that long."

"Oh How long will we have to stay here? Seto-sama told me it might be for a while, but I don't want to be here forever ..." Kirche and Kiriko nodded.

"If you're going to be here long enough, we will see about lowering the rates, but we will get the estimates to you as soon as we can."

When Kiriko became part of the royal family of Jurai, she got her own planet as a territory, and part of the tax revenue from it became hers to live off of. Personally, she had her own national budget of a major country on earth. And Amane, Ryoko, Neiju also had sufficient budgets, but spending money frivolously was something they all wanted to avoid.

"Maybe we can just use the Kamidake as a base, it's nice and big in there." Miki said happily.

"Even so, the cost of anchoring your ship will be necessary, and considering the future expansion of activities, you still might need a base in Racepshi."

The Kamidake itself was a top secret. So they wouldn't be able to bring outside people into it.

"Do not worry, this place you're in is being permanently paid for by Seto."

"Does it include meals?"

"And toiletries?"

"Of course, we even have outfits for rent that are in the budget."

"I'm happy about that, but it's a poor consolation prize from that old hag."

"Like Ryoko said, I'm glad were living well, but I'm upset I have to be away my beloved husband. The luxury just seems empty without him, doesn't it?"

"Oh, Neiju-sama, that reminds me.... I got a message from Seto to give you... "Because the wedding was stopped in the middle of the ceremony, you are not married yet."

"Whaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaat!" Everyone said suddenly realizing that was true.

They would only officially be recognized as married after their oaths were read and no objections were made.

"... .. Then that also means we haven't been announced as Fuku's backup." D said with a firm tone as usual.

"....."

“.....”

“Boy that old hag sure has gotten us into a bind.”

“If we can't pilot the Kamidake outside we should consider camouflaging Mizuki and using it.”

Mizuki had no proper exterior of its own yet and when linking with the Kamidake it would get in the way if it wasn't specially designed not to, so a special one was still in development while it remained mounted in the Kamidake.

“No! That's too much trouble!” Miki said frustrated.

“Hmm, the Kamidake is a small ship... we can always just place it inside of a large shipping vessel and fly it around that way... “

“.....” Unusually Makihi ignored Miki. She remained silent.

And Neiju who was watching her quickly realized something and had a bitter smile. “Shit...”

“What's wrong?”

“Although they're very similar in character, this is still a huge difference between their experience levels and positions.”

“Is that a bad thing!?” Miki asked.

“Don't get angry. I didn't mean anything bad by it. Your proposal is the simplest and quickest as a solution, even Racepshi has nothing to say against it... now do they.”

“... .. if that is what you wish to do... then as an official of Racepshi, I will not be able to refuse that request.” Mr. Makihi replied to Neiju's question.

“Eheehheheheh, really? Really!?” Everyone except Neiju was amazed and stared at Makihi.

“I am only one of the officers and do not have the full authority of Racepshi to say so, but I know that Seina was brought here against his own will. If I receive a formal return request from Kiriko, and you have the ability to safely do so without causing a panic, I must allow it.”

“So, you were quiet on purpose.”

“Makihi, you communicate just like that old hag does.”

“Oh really?” Makihi smiled.

“You have to think about what you can do for Seina on your own while you're here. As Seto said, you're going to be here for a while.”

“So, in a way we are being tested on what we can do? And here I was expecting that everything would be happily ever after, after the wedding...” said Neiju.

“Well then, I think it's best then that I leave the decision making to my more experienced sister and her team ...” Miki turning to check from confirmation from Kirche. Kirche nodded, D stopped eating curry for a moment to nod then resumed eating immediately after a glancing at Miki.

Amane, Ryoko, and Neiju nodded in conformation.

“Roger that.” Kiriko nodded and turned face to Makihi.

“Ok then, since it seems that a suitable conclusion has been reached, I will issue a transfer key code to this place, please use it to go back and forth between the Kamidake and this place.” Makihi bowed and left.

Kanji

翠靈	Suirei
三翠	Misui
ナムワロール	Namuwarōru
六火	Rotsuka
緋乃	Akeno
火泉	Kasen
翠天	Suiten
氷牙	Hiyouga
十騎	Jitsuki
十騎・煉・騎珀	Jitsuki Ren Kihaku
蘭香	Ranga
颯花	Souka
バルウェムル	Baruwemuru
珀天	Hakuten
磨白	Mashiro
花櫻	Kaou
磨地	Machi
化抄	Kashiyou
奇玉	Kigiyoku
炎天	Enten
真朱	Shinshu

Chapter Four: Operation "New Encounter"

In Racepshi, Hakuren and her girls lived in special premises dedicated to the royal families of Renza.

"Yes ... thanks." In the living room, Hakuren received a message from her butler and nodded as if relieved. The butler left the room, leaving only her group of four in the living room.

"Our request was tentatively approved by the Great Council."

"So that means that Seina-san and ZINV-sama will be allowed to conduct activities outside of Racepshi?"

From the living room, nothing but trees could be seen outside as far as the eyes could see. This was a palace which the founding kings of Renza had special-made in the past. It had plenty of offices and conference halls and a big stage where various attractions and performances could be carried out. It was a place where 20,000 people could easily live. That's why Hakuren wanted to use it as a base for their anti-pirate activities.

"Yes, we should be able to with this." she told Karen.

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At the same time Makihi came to Kiriko with a woman in butlers' clothes.

"Everyone, I have been able to prepare you a base as requested, this will be your butler who will stand in for you in all delegated affairs."

"Hello, I am glad to be able to serve as your butler and to take care of everyone's affairs. I am Marci Diplos, please let me know if you need anything."

"She is affiliated with Racepshi, but she is originally from the Renza Federation, so she will be able to travel freely outside of Racepshi."

"So does that mean..."

"Yes, Hakuren's plans were provisionally approved by the Renza Federation Council and are being put in motion. You are free to move about Racepshi now, but keep in mind

this is the only place where you have your own security and I'm sorry, but I must please ask again that you refrain from contacting Hakuren-sama and Seina-sama."

"Then we have no choice, I understand."

"Thank you very much for that. All your assets have been made available for use in Racepshi. From now on, you have unrestricted use of them in the Racepshi and surrounding areas as well."

"So, we can use our money even in Renza, that's good and all but ... we still can't actually go out there, right?"

"Yes, it is currently impossible, but the range of activities you are allowed to do has expanded, so please enjoy your stay on entertainment planet Racepshi everyone." Makihi left without taking Marci.

"Hey Kiriko, do you really think we should trust anyone who was introduced to us by that demon hag."

*** * * Translators' note: They are talking about Makihi. * * ***

"It's fine... this woman is a former part of Seto's crew, I know her."

Everyone stared at Marci and sighed. Even Neiju felt relieved.

"Long time no see, Kiriko-san. I never thought I'd live to see you become a member of the royal family."

"Well, I never expected you to be a spy from Renza."

"That mission is long over, so you don't have to worry."

"Is that so?" Kiriko didn't know whether Marci was a spy for Renza or a double agent, but she knew Seto would know.

At the very least, having a spy representing them as a diplomat would be problematic. Of course, as a former member of Seto's staff, she would be very well equipped for the position if she was on their side.

"Well then, I guess we're your masters... uhm"

"Please call me Marci, Kiriko-sama." Marci corrected her posture and bowed deeply.

"Well, then Ms. Marci, let's get to work right away.... are there any guided tours here?"

"Yes, parties are free to participate, and tours are held every day, and there are many who will invite you once they know you're here."

"... Oh, that's not a bad thing, is it?"

"Hmm... Where should we start? Maybe here?" Amane, Ryoko and Neiju said, as they looked at brochures.

"Ms. Marci, can you give us information on this place?"

"Yes, here you go." A list was displayed in front of Kiriko.

"Hmm"

"... .. Oh, that reminds me! Makihi wanted me to tell you that if you're interested, there are places where you can go perform if you like." Marci said.

"I was only kidding when I said was an actor."

"Well, even so, there are many places here for amateur performers, and anyone is welcome to apply to perform."

"Really?"

"Yes, we have spaces for everything from amateur singers to amateur fighters. However, if you do decide to do such a thing you might want to use an alias, but it's up to you. You may also want to do the same when actively participating in various parties. If you want to gather information and build connections with Renza, there's a network of people here who would love to meet all of you. After all Kiriko, you're a Juraian royal, Amane is a former top model and Mr. Kaunaq's daughter"

"Ryoko is a former pirate and Balta's princess."

"It would be better to introduce her as the granddaughter of General Balta then as a former pirate." Marci smiled wryly at Ryoko.

"You will find there are many Baltan's here. As for Neiju she is the charismatic shrine maiden of Melmas, and it's no surprise that Ms. D will be invited by many."

"Well, she is a living witness to the prehistoric civilization era, no matter where she goes, she should garner attention especially in Renza."

"I would like to participate in these parties on the condition that they are curry parties."

"... .. uhm, well ..."

"Hey D, I don't think that is a type of party ..." Miki said.

"Miki-san, there are many curries served here and similar dishes, it's a standard cuisine and can easily be served for a party in a buffet style." Marci said.

"Really?"

"How wonderful!" D said, with great enthusiasm. Her normally expressionless eyes were glittering, no... shining.

"It is said that the giant humanoid weapons, and the Renza Federation seems to have a remarkable connection to the prehistoric civilization."

"Curry is justice! It was a popular dish even in the early days of the prehistoric civilization, and while ZINV was sleeping with me, the galaxy must have learned to cook it up a million times better!" D stood on the chair and began monologuing with emphasis.

"... Well, it is nice that you feel like participating, but you shouldn't just agree to it so you can ignore people and eat."

"As for you Miki, I'm sure those who know what you are would love to meet you. And Kirche, well, you're a celebrity."

"What about Acha and Fuku? There are a lot of staff here to guard them, but they are still strangers. We don't really want to leave them with people we don't know."

"I understand... the two of them are still small, they would be bored by the parties... ... But Acha needs to go to school."

"Is that possible, are there correspondence classes here?"

"There are many people who stay on Racepshi long term with their families, so there are childcare facilities and a good educational system."

"Uhm ... Ms. Marci, are the staff and security of those facilities reliable?" Sending Acha to school brought up even more concerns.

"They are staffed elusively by Makihi's most trusted employees, so their identities are certain. I wouldn't say the security is on par with Seto-sama and Airi-sama's security, but I would still rate it a B plus."

"Well, at the very least, the Kamidake and Mizuki are well guarded... I think we have no real choice but to put Fuku on the Kamidake."

"... ... OK, but why do we even have to go socialize at all?" Miki asked.

"I know it seems like a detour, but it's important for us to build a good network of connections here. Think of it as recon. Anyways, I want to avoid situations where we end up getting dispersed and isolated so if you find out something interesting, please don't go running off investigating it on your own. And D, try not to eat so much curry you get sick, ok?"

Laughter came from then all and they all nodded deeply.

x x x

On a big stage there was a chair with only three legs.

“.....” Seina was sitting in the chair and couldn't take his eyes off the big stage. All of the lights in the hall were turned off. In the dark, he could see a garden from a huge window about 5 meters high and 15 meters wide. Maya's back was floating like a picture projected on a screen.

Because there was little light, the appearance of Maya was almost a silhouette, but she was clearly naked. Of course, only a small part of the contour of her body could be seen. All the naughty bits were covered by jet black, the line of her limbs though were clearly visible.

Even so, Seina was fascinated by Maya's dancing. He even forgot that she was naked as he watched.

“Hoooouah!” A huge breath from Seina echoed in the hall abruptly. It was such a magnificent dance that he had forgotten to breathe until his body panicked and forced him too. But Seina kept staring at the stage without noticing it.

Maya was a pretty girl, but commonplace compared to Amane and Gyokuren. Because she was a trained dancer her body had no womanly curves, she was somewhat neutral looking. But as soon she began dancing, she exerted an abnormal beauty comparable to Amane and Gyokuren.

“.....”

The dance quietly stopped, Maya slowly extended herself towards Seina, and Seina slowly stood up as if to respond to her. However, he stood frozen the spot and didn't move too much.

“... .. It's mesmerizing, isn't it?” Maya asked.

“Wow!” Suddenly the lights turned on and he remembered that Maya was naked. Seina quickly looked away, but accidentally banged his shins into the chair. “Ouch, aah... .. please put some clothes on.”

“I see, you should have pushed me down by now... You should have been overcome with lust and desire.” Maya was confused.

“There won't be any of that happening! Please get dressed.” He looked for an exit but this place was Maya's personal practice area and was the size of two gymnasiums so he couldn't spot any doorway. Of course, he had gotten here through a gate so there should have been a gate somewhere, but he was having no luck finding it.

“That was a secret dance performed by our house for generations, “The dance of courtship”.”

“Courtship”

“Maybe your resolve is just too strong... or my dance wasn't good enough ... either way, it's my fault it failed.”

"Don't say that ... that dance was really wonderful, but please there is no need to do such a dance for me ..."

"But this place is perfect for us to be alone. Although, I guess I could perform that dance in public if you like ..."

"No, that's not what I mean ... I don't need you to do a courtship dance for me in the first place, I just got married..."

"That's never stopped anyone else before, if anything most people find it helps rekindle the fire in their marriage..."

"What kind of weird customers do you entertain here?"

"Coming here is a frequent request I get from customers."

"Isn't that a bit irresponsible?"

"Of course, I'd be happy to take responsibility should anything happen ..."

"I just got married, I can't cheat ... No, I don't want to cheat, cheating isn't good!"

"From what I've heard, it seems that your marriage has not yet been concluded because you were kidnapped by Hakuren-sama before the wedding ceremony."

"And?!"

"I do not know how it works on Earth, but the Galactic Federation officially establishes marriage through confirmation of the oaths of marriage. At this stage Seina, you're still single."

"No! It may not have concluded, but I'm engaged.... and I have even more marriages for me in the future haven't you heard."

"Yes... I have heard something about that."

"Then you can see why I don't need you to be doing any dances like that for me."

"Okay, fine My older sisters and mother are going to scold me for this, but I know I can use more training, so I guess I should give up this time." Maya sighed greatly, she went and picked up a robe and put it on. Seina turned back around when he confirmed that she was dressed properly.

"Oh, by the way, Hakuren's plan has been officially approved by the Renza Federation and they're entering the preparatory phase."

"So, they want my help with pirate suppression?"

"Yes, but this is just a trial operation. A mobile stage battleship and personnel will be dispatched, which will be used to transport ZINV around Renza. The base of operations however will be in

Racepshi, you have permission to stay anywhere in Renza space though since a visa for you has been issued. You can go anywhere you want outside of Racepshi.”

“What about Kiriko-san?” For Seina Kiriko was a priority.

“Fuku-sama and Acha-sama can meet with you at any time. But I'm sorry, for political reasons you cannot contact Kiriko-sama or the rest of them. But they are here enjoying the facilities for now.”

“Okay ... I understand, so how long do you think that will last?”

“Since Hakuren's team is just an experimental unit at this stage, if its usefulness is proved, it will become part of the Renza Federation's multinational force. As the owner of ZINV you would rank just under the consensus of the heads of the 5 nations. If that happens, there is a chance that Kiriko-sama and Kamidake will get permission to be part of the team too.”

“Just under the heads of the nation... that gives me quite a strange feeling.”

“As long as there isn't anything that the five leaders have an issue with, there should be no restrictions on your behavior. So, no one can force you to carry out orders or compel you to do something, and don't forget Gyokuren is soon to be one of them. That is to say you won't be forced to lend them Kiriko's squad or any of the Kamidake's technology.”

“... .. So, do you think that will take long?”

*** * * Translators' note: Somehow the conversation cuts to them talking about the Royal Trees getting involved, and ZINV having to fight other trees and then their conversation is interrupted as Hakuren and Gyokuren watch them talk while hidden in the room. Gyokuren looks upset as Maya hugs him, it's pointless to go over. I'm cutting it. * * ***

Soon after, Seina and Maya left to go to a transfer gate.

“Wow, it looks like it's floating in the water.”

They arrived at a palace surrounded by a moat over 500 meters wide. The water level was about the same height as the ground, and there were no ripples on the water's surface. It looked like a mirror. It also made it look like it was floating on the water.

“This is where Seina-sama and Hakuren-sama will be carrying out your activities.”

“Is this the base?”

A huge building formed of pure white marble and gold stood in front of him. It looked like a palace and had a design that mixed both western and Muslim architecture. The moat that surrounded the circumference was almost like a pool, the water was clear, and there were no fish or seaweed. The water depth varied, from shallow to deep.

“That is used as residential space by Aquatic people.”

“Aquatic people?”

“From what I've read of earth literature, I think that mermaids and mermen are the easiest comparison.”

“Wow! But aren't those imaginary creatures?”

There were various intelligent creatures in the universe. Even at the Galaxy Academy, there were many tribes, but the overwhelmingly large percentage of them were Earthling types and Wau's. Some of them had remodeled their own bodies, others couldn't live easily in an Earth type atmosphere and some people were androids. But Seina hadn't been in space that long and had only seen a small part of the academy. He'd never seen any mermaids, but there were many cosmic races with chimeric bodies.

“There are quite a few special races that live in the Kaou part of the Renza Federation, and they are strangely similar to the legendary creatures that have been passed on in the literature and traditions of planets in the early civilization stages.”

“Legendary creatures?”

“Please feel free to ask Hakuren.”

At the entrance, Maya pointed Seina to Hakuren who was dressed in a formal outfit. In front of her on the sides of her path were 100 escorts and female officers aligned at both ends of the aisle.

“Oh, is that her? That's right.... Hakuren is a princess, isn't she?”

Originally as one of Seto's officer, she had elegance in how she behaved, but now she had a dignified air about her added to that which made her feel a little difficult to approach.

“This is as far as I can take you, please excuse me.” Maya bowed to Seina and to Hakuren and left.

x x x

After they greeted each other again, Seina was given a tour through the palace.

“This place was built by the founders of the Renza Federation and the founders of the five houses.”

The interior looked like the exterior, there were a variety of stones and tiles, and a combination of plaster and bricks. It was not as spectacular as a European palace, but it was still a fancy structure. The size of it however gave it the feel of a huge jungle gym or a section of a shopping mall.

“Why did they make such a place in Racepsi?”

“Well, Racepshi has a lot of visitors. Half of the buildings here are residential. I know this is small compared to the residential area of the Kamidake. But it is more than big enough to work as our base.”

“No, I mean why have a personal palace in Racepshi?”

It was like permanently renting a floor at the hotel in Disneyland or permanently renting a mansion in Las Vegas and refurbishing to be your residence.

“Well... it's a nice place to hide and you can do a lot of things here a lot easier.”

“Oh, Is that so?”

It was like standing in a forest to hide in the trees. Seina couldn't help but admire the founder of Renza's ability to secure such a large area on a planetary scale ship and building a palace. He was scared to ask how much the rent was.

“... .. Uhm... Hakuren, how should I refer to you?”

“Seina-sama, you are the master of the Godly Knight ZINV, so please refer to me as Hakuren like usual.”

“... ok then, Ms. Hakuren, I've heard we will be combating pirates, but what are we doing specifically?”

“Basically, exactly what we did in the Galactic Federation, but since we can't use the Kamidake for now, and fighting with only a single ship is dangerous, we will be practicing fighting here for now.”

“Will we be fighting entire fleets?”

“Probably just small fleets at first but you can expect encounters on scale with that time we encountered the Big Da Ruma.”

“Are there really that many pirates here?”

It was no wonder this was urgent for her; Seina experienced the feeling of being surrounded by a fleet of pirates and if Seto's Mikagami hadn't shown up he wouldn't have made it.

“It's not as big as the Da Ruma Guild, but there are a lot of quite troublesome pirates in their ranks but for now, let me show you is the command center.”

Gyokuren opened a door to a space built similar to the Taj Mahal, which was nearly 100 meters in height and width. In the center was a huge pool just like the one which surrounded the palace exterior. They headed along the central aisle through the open entrance, there was a stage somewhat close to the center. It was set up like a concert hall with audience seating around it. Of course, there were also box seat booths for stage operators to use. However, what surprised Seina most was a group of plants in several huge cases.



“A Tropical botanical garden? ... Wait are those faeries?” He saw organisms that looked like bipedal walking cats, they were only about 30 centimeters in height and had wings on their backs. He looked around and saw shadows in the pool that looked almost like those of mermaids. In the operator seat was a giant cat eared girl, she was well over two meters tall. It looked like a bunch of fantasy world dwellers were there.

“You seem to be surprised again.”

“..... I genuinely am, what is it? Is this cosplay or something like that? Are you pulling a prank on me?”

“A detailed explanation would take some time, but to keep it brief, these plants produce a substance called magic that caused them to evolve like that. It happened on every planet with these magic plants, perhaps there were once magic plants on Earth.”

“Oh I see, but ... It’s just so surreal, seeing all these fantasy creatures in administrative uniforms.”



“Are you the master of ZINV-sama?” Seina glanced sideways to the source of that voice, there was a fearless and beautiful looking woman with horns like a demon close to 2 meters long, they looked like they were made from the branches of a Baobab tree and were about 3 meters.

*** * * Translators’ note: The D of the group. * * ***

“Seina, this is the Ogre tribe leader Kaguya Ravel, the captain of a fleet of armored cavalry units that will be stationed at the base.”

“Hmm, what a slender body, we have to train you to toughen you up a bit more Hm ... but at least you have a pretty face.” Kaguya, who stared at Seina's face for a bit before she held out her hand for a shake, nodded in satisfaction. “It's nice to meet you Seina, I am looking forward to fighting alongside the Godly Knight, ZINV.”



"Oh... yes, I'm Seina Yamada, nice to meet you too." He shook her hand, her grip felt very feminine, but Seina could tell she could grip his hand with more force than Ekushito had earlier on Racepsi if she wanted to. There was a bigger problem though as they shook hands... her breasts were flush with Seina's eye level.

*** * * Translators' note: The Yayoi of the group. * * ***

"And this is Sajyu Jumedo of Dryad tribe, she is the captain of the fleet flagship Tsubasaki."

"... ..!"

Hakuren's introduction gave Seina the excuse he needed to look away from Kaguya as Sajyu emerged from the bark of tree next to Seina, who screamed in surprise.

"Uhuhu, did I surprise you?"

The upper body of a lustrous woman emerged further from the tree. Fortunately, her chest and crotch were hidden by clothing like objects from the trees, she was still exposed enough that he hesitated to look straight at her limbs. He noticed a sweet smell drifting from her, his heart beat

faster.

"Don't be shy," without concern for Kaguya, Sajyu knocked her hand from Seina's and curled herself around Seina body and touched him.

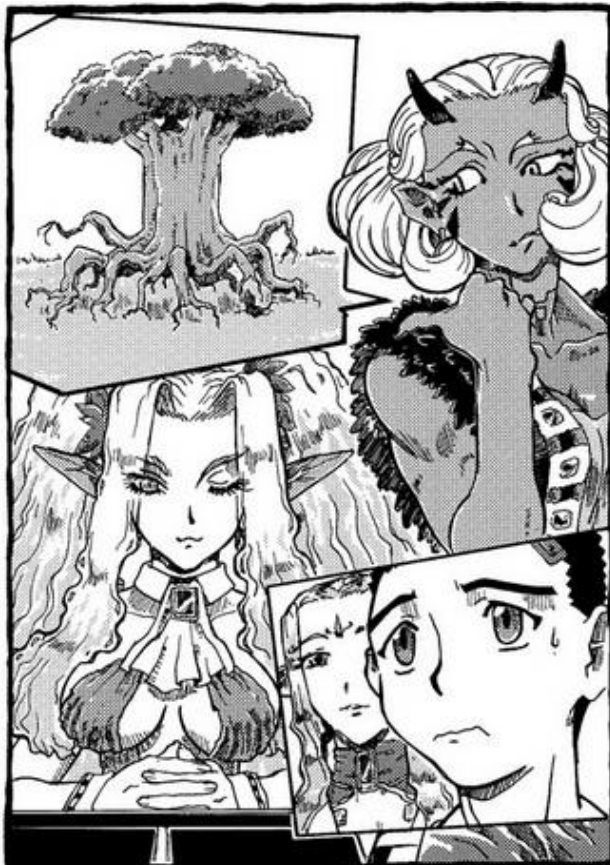
"Ordinary humans are usually amazed when they first meet us. It's regrettable that I have to meet you in a formal setting like this, I usually prefer to meet people naked ..."

"Get off of him or I will have you burned to death!" Gyokuren said with an evil look on her face. Sajyu let Seina go and backed off.

"Oh, my bad... .. No need to get so scary..."

"Oh wow... I never thought I'd meet someone like a Royal Tree..."

"Well, we are considered to be similar to the Royal Trees, but we are a completely different



species, we have no supernatural powers like they do..." Sajyu completely separated from the tree trunk and landed on the floor. "We can also completely separate from the tree. We can go somewhere together private if you like and I can tell you all about what we can do ..." She had a strange attractive charm about her. She was putting out a smell like being in the forest that attracted people's attention.

"Seina, how about we have barbecued dryad to celebrate the formation of the experimental pirate unit?" Gyokuren said angrily.

"... .. Ehem.... well, if you're ever interested just let me know." Sajyu quickly escaped back into the tree.

"Whew I guess a dryad's sexual appetite can't be helped ..." Gyokuren stared at Kaguya with a wry smile.

"A Dryads sexual appetite?"

"Well, they were originally a kind of demon that sucked the spirit from people and animals..."

"Be careful of her ... they have been known to suck some smaller species completely dry, so if you do anything with her try not to overdo it."

"...Heh..."

Gyokuren looked mad, "There is no need for her to suck anyone here. If she wants to suck someone, she can scavenge around Racepshi, there are lots of rich people here who would love for her to do that to them. It's a free all-you-can-eat buffet."

"Ahahahaha! Well now witch queen, don't forget that she is from the Kaou kingdom, we have a different way of thinking."

"Oh, so are then you saying you are like that too, Kaguya?"

"No, but the world is full of strange people."

Kaguya looked personally offended; she was a beautiful woman of exceptional height. Her muscles were developed but not macho. She had golden eyes and red copper skin, her gray hair was glossy like silk thread, it looked almost silver and was just a little above shoulder length. Her horns were black and polished looking and unexpectedly long. She was a somewhat fearless and calm looking woman.

"I for one know better than to compete with the Witch Queen."

"Witch Queen?" Seina asked.

"Oh! Seina, there's some more people we would like to introduce you to" Hakuren said running in to disrupt Kaguya from answering that.

"Can nya please introduce us, lady Shirohana (**Hakuren's real name**)?" a couple of cat faeries asked.

(Oh, they add nya's to their sentences, how cute.) Seina thought.

The cat faeries flew without flapping their wings, they seemed to be flying in a magical way.

"Where is the commander?"

"Uhm?"

"Well?"

"Oh, I know, he accidental stayed up all night long."

"Oh no! Someone go wake him up! I'll stall."

"Yes, yes!"

A cat faery came to greet Seina.

"Nice to meet you. Say uhm... can I pet you..."

"Ok! Nya!"

Seina stroked the faeries head with his hand, it didn't feel like cat hair, but it was soft and comfortable to touch.

"That's nice, it feels good, nya." The cat faery had a pleased look on its face.

"Heh ... well, I've got a lot of practice from petting Fuku." It was a daily routine for him to play with Fuku and pet her. "I never would have expected faeries to enjoy being petted though."



The other cat faeries came back in with the sleeping commander floating magically behind them.

*** * * Translators' note: The Rara of the group. * * ***

"... It's an elf." Seina who was stroking the cat faery stopped and froze up upon seeing the elf

The elf had bright blond hair with white skin and long ears, tall and slender limbs and a breathtakingly beautiful figure comparable to Gyokuren. It resembled an elf of classic literature only prettier.

"By the way, that's a man."

"What!" Seina was taken aback by Suiren's comment. He stared at that male (?) Elf once more.

* * * Translators' note: That's how it's written in the original text, always male(?) * * *



It was impossible to tell from his body, even without breasts it couldn't be said that he had a man's body. No matter how he looked at him, Seina could only see him as a super beautiful woman. There were surprisingly beautiful men who camouflaged themselves as women, and of course she-males, but this was something altogether different. He could see no such thing as a male elf in front of him. No such thing. He could only conclude that Suiren was joking.

"... What?" The long eyelashes of the male (?) Elf slowly moved; pale eyes of clear marine blue appeared like a sacred fountain springing from the entrance of a forest. "... .. huh... Ahhhhhhhhhhhhh!"

The male (?) Elf quickly awoke and understood the situation instantly, he rushed to salute Hakuren. "Sorry! I was asleep ... this so unexpected! How did I Did you...?" He noticed the faeries and immediately gave up trying to say anything and just drooped.

"... .. Yes, we dragged you here. You're welcome... We will try to wake you up earlier nyext time ..."

"I forgot this time, nya."

The faery flew away to escape from the male (?) Elf. The cat faery that Seina was stroking hesitated a little, but then followed.

"I am sorry about that," the Male (?) elf's voice was a bit husky but was almost in the soprano range.

"Will you introduce us?"

"Yes." Hakuren nodded deeply to him (?) and faced Seina.

"Seina, this is Souren Karyuuku Kaou, he will be the commander of our troops."

"I am Seina Yamada, I'm sorry to disturb your rest, but thank you for coming here to meet me."

"I've heard about you Seina, you're the one who defeated the Galactic Federation's biggest pirate guild. Ms. Hakuren has sent me lots of detailed accounts of your exploits. You seem like a noble spirited man, I am honored to be able to fight together with you."

"Thank you."

Seina was glad that the male (?) Elf saw him as Seina Yamada and not just the master of ZINV like the others. It was the same impression he had felt when he had first met Seto. He knew that Souren was a male but his fragile beauty, which was different from Gyokuren and Amame's, caused Seina to turn red despite his efforts to stop himself. Speaking of elves in the fantasy world, they, along with dwarfs, were the two most populous races.

"... .. It's like I've suddenly arrived in a faery tale world. I heard that there was something called magic that caused all this?" Seina was excited when he first went up to space, but he never expected to encounter a fantasy world in space. It felt just as exciting as when he had first gone into space.

"Yes, but it's a long story. I can tell you some other time if you'd like, but first where is Kaguya? I don't see Ms. Sajyu, have you met her yet?"

"I'm keeping a safe distance." said Sajyu. Kaguya looked at Gyokuren.

"Oh... while you're here, remember not to fall into the trap of wine and women..."

"Why do you say that commander?" Kaguya seriously asked.

"Hey, well ... I am a man after all. I know where it leads." Souren blushed, but his appearance made it seem like he was lying. The soft curves of his hips and the thinness of his limbs did not make him seem manly at all.

"I'm sure you might have to convince him of that ... Commander but I'm sure this is his not his first time dealing with female officials, is it, Seina?" Kaguya sent a glance at Seina while grinning.

“It's obvious isn't it... I'm sure Seina had no trouble telling right?”

“Hmm really, did you think he's really a man Seina?”

(..... No, I still am not sure even with all these people saying it!) Seina thought. It was a miracle that he didn't actually say that aloud. Seina had come into contact with many women of exceptional beauty such as Amane and Gyokuren, Kiriko and Seto, and the fact that this male (?) fantasy world inhabitant was reading as one was confusing. But so was the existence of the elves in and of itself.

“Enough with this. Let's get down to business and start our training. Seina has no idea how to fight in this battlefield, and I'd like to start going over that, if that's alright with him.”

“That's fine by me, I would like brush Hakuren up on procedure as well.” Kaguya headed for the transfer gate by herself.

“Let's go Seina, Hakuren-sama please come too,” he said, and quickly took Seina by the arm and walked to the transfer gate.

Seina was taken aback by the feel of Souren's arm. His floral aroma and atmosphere and the feel of his arm in contact with him gave him a feeling that could only be thought of that of a woman's arm. (I'm a man, he's a man! Why is he even taking me by the arm in the first place!?) Seina kept saying in his head in a panic

*** * * Translators' note: I would just like to give fair warning to those sensitive to this,**

A. This is 2018 and this is Tenchi Muyo, get over it.

B. It gets waaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaay, WAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAY worse in the next few chapters. The next two chapters are practically endless this. * * *

Chapter Five: The Truth about Renza

"This is the fleet's flagship, the stage battleship 'Burst Squirrel'," Kaguya happily said.

It was a battleship shaped like an aircraft carrier that was anchored in a large, dedicated dock 200 meters long.

"What do you think of its Flower passage? It's more than fit for a legendary Godly Knight like yours."

"... .. Flower passage?"

Under this circumstance, it was a very uncomfortable phrase that Seina never expected to hear.

*** * * Translators' note: A flower passage is a kabuki theater stage feature... To learn more about it look up hanamichi. * * ***

"We are going to take the armored cavalry out on this ship, so I have to show you how to battle in a one-on-one fight." Souren explained.

"... Me?"

"We must teach you how to fight with honor, and since you have a Godly Knight, naturally we have to teach you how to enter into battle from the flower passage."

"Uhm, but"

"Seina, why are you so confused?"

"Hahaha Souren, I'm sure he's not that confused. There are many stories where people use humanoid weapons on the Earth where Seina is from."

"What? I heard that the Earth was an early-stage civilization, do they have humanoid weapons?"

"No, it's all fiction. Actually, I have some tapes, I'll show you some time."

"Oh! That sounds interesting."

"Wait a second! It's true that we have mecha shows, but they don't do anything with flower passages."

"How do they fight in Earth fiction then?"

"Usually, enemies appear and begin attacking the city and rampaging through the streets and then the pilots get in a huge mech and march in to fight them"

"Hmmm ... I see." Seina looked at the ship again, mostly to look away from Souren.

It was an ordinary battleship except it had a deck with a big runway. It looked like an aircraft carrier. Of course, the ethnic designs adorning the outside was very gaudy compared to ships in

the Galactic Federation. Compared to Juraian ships, Kamidake, Ryo-Ohki though it wasn't that out of place.

"Captain Kaguya, what other ships are there?"

"Oh, sorry ... I got distracted by stories of humanoid weapons."

"For now, our fleet is pretty limited."

"You have Godly Knight ZINV. So there isn't much need, let's go up to the bridge. The Captain, Sajyu, is there. She should be able to explain more."

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The bridge was a normal shape. Here, too, a large case of a tropical botanicals was set up, and there was also a tank for an aquatic race operator. It wasn't that different from the bridge of a royal ship. However, it didn't feel like a battleship, rather it felt like the lounge of a passenger ship.

"Well, it's about time you got here. ♡" Sajyu, who was in the captain's seat, turned to face Kaguya when they came in. The chest of her uniform was opened and messy. Seina wasn't sure if this was a separate body or her normal body, but there was a tree intertwined with the tropical plants in the large case behind here and it was planted in a mossy medium as if it had been rooted there permanently.

"... Weren't you in a different plant earlier?"

"Oh, Sajyu's body moves through from the roots."

Sajyu's tree pulled its roots out of the ground and started walking like a spider.

"Hehe, I can move on the ground and swim underwater, the only thing I can't do is fly in the sky."

"... Wow, that's neat."

"Sajyu, don't keep us waiting." Souren's signal caused the window of the bridge to become blurred and the color of the lights changed instantaneously.

"!?"

"Don't worry, I've just put up a barrier, that's all." Souren moved closer to Seina to put him at ease. But for Seina that was counterproductive.

"Commander Souren, please step away from Seina and come help me?" Sajyu turned red.

"Oh, yes, be there in a bit..." Souren moved away from Seina but didn't seem to understand the real meaning of what Sajyu said.

"I called you all here because I can't explain this very complicated story safely in the HQ. Although the Kaou nation is leading this experimental unit, auditors are coming in from other sources, and I don't want to spread this information too far" Souren stared at Seina with a serious look. It was with glowing eyes that seemed to be making a confession of love. Of course, it was certain that Souren didn't feel that way, it was no doubt just his natural look. Even so, Seina's heart beat unexpectedly.

(..... Ahhh, don't! He's a dude. Quit it.) Fortunately, the crisis was avoided by the amazingly strong spiritual power of Seina and the decisive fact that the other party was a man, but he completely forgot the issue of Maya trying to get him to have an affair and that he should not be cheating in the first place. So, Souren's power was still terribly strong. However, in the next moment he forgot about it completely.

"Eh?" Seina was confused by the sight in front of him. Souren, Kaguya, Sajyu, and even Hakuren bowed deeply in front of Seina.

"First, I must apologize to you Seina. It is an apology from my heart, I'm sorry for having brought you here." Hakuren said.

"What!?"

"It may be frustrating, but I will make it up to you when everything is over. But for now, please, I need your co-operation." Seina and Hakuren were friends, and he wasn't upset, but it was also true that she had disturbed his wedding ceremony. Such troubles were the norm for Seina. Nevertheless, as a formality since she represented her nation, she needed to formally apologize to him.

"OK, I accept your apology. As a member of the GP, I see the urgency in your circumstances, and I agree this was an emergency."

"I appreciate you saying that ..."

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Seina moved to a large space around a huge plant case. "So, what exactly is up with this empty area?"

"It's for the Royal Tree."

"Do the people of Renza understand that the trees have emotions and are related to one another?"

Kaguya shook her head a bit, confused. "What do you mean?"

"No, these trees are in the lower generations, they have never shown any signs of sentience in the first place, so there many people who don't know that the trees are advanced life forms.

Those of us from the founder's families, had a feeling that they deserved our respect, but they were still considered just parts of the ship."

"So, they're just treated as weapons here, I was worried about that..."

"Currently, most ships are sixth generation and lower, so most are just treated as low-ranking ship parts."

"Parts"

"It's an embarrassing story, we actually became Seto's officers because we didn't know... Until we actually met Mikagami-san and other trees, we didn't know they were sentient. That's a big part of why we went there to get them."

"..... I see, you just figured they had really powerful ships..."

"In other words, you want to know how our attitudes towards the trees differ from yours."

"Yes, Commander Souren, I think that might be the biggest difficulty for him... .." Hakuren looked at Souren.

"Jurai thinks of the trees as sisters, family even, do you feel that way too Seina?"

"Yes... That is, uhm....." Seina got confused about how to talk about ZINV.

"Please give a detailed statement to Commander Souren."

"Ok ZINV is age fixed for some odd reason and has shown some odd abilities. I do not know if it is a result of that or not, but it is somewhat different from other trees. The first thing to know about the trees is that they hate fighting, and they are sensitive to the other people deaths. Of course, they hate when it's one of their sister trees too. But ZINV doesn't seem to be hesitant to fight in such a fatal manner and that may be the reason why its age was fixed."

"That was the opinion of the investigators, youthful beings are sometimes capable of being incredibly cruel, like human children."

"Normally, the trees are pure, calm and gentle beings, they don't like fighting, but they are willing to do whatever it takes to deter it."

"So do you not want to use ZINV in battle?"

"I understand that I have more than enough power to fight. I will also exercise that power, if necessary, but I won't use it without limits. I'll try everything I can not to."

"Many of the people of the Kaou nation have a strong empathy with nature, so even though they are subordinates, there are many people who are sensitive to the trees wishes and respectful of their existence. This time in particular though, we had to carefully select highly skilled staff from whom that wouldn't be a problem."

"I can feel a proper will even in the lower generations, especially as a plant type life form, I know what that power is like. I'm sure Kaguya somehow feels it too."

"I think that all the cavalry of the Kaou feels it more or less ... but still, I will not hesitate to destroy the opponent's armored Knights... However, it is actually rare in a battle to completely destroy the opponent. We revere them here, that is practically sacrilegious But there are many people who disregard that in battle. Pirates only view them as tools. But for them, it's an expensive part, so they take good care of them still in a way."

"Is that so?" For a moment, Seina remembered Fuku and her clones being used as experimental materials on Tarrant's Base, but he immediately shook his head to drive out that memory. "I don't care, I want you to treat ZINV properly whenever I'm involved."

"Yes, of course, of course. But sometimes, when a unit is captured, some of the pilots are forced to escape by themselves. In that case they usually self-destruct to keep them from getting their units, and in some cases, it will even destroy the enemy's units. So please know there might be a circumstance like that."

"Does that really happen!?" In a sense, it was the most shocking thing he heard since coming to Renza.

"Even knowing they are sentient, that is still the best course of action. We don't want them to fall into the hands of others."

"To begin with, we keep information about trees after the 4th generation secret, and we keep the technology used in the Knight's secret as well. We even have multiple companies who make the parts for the core to keep it secret, no one but the heads of the five houses know how they're made."

Seina's naturally looked to Gyokuren.

"Unfortunately, I'm still not officially Queen."

"How do they do maintenance on them?"

"Although the body maintenance can be done here, the core part requires maintenance from a specialized manufacturer from a major family house once every several years."

"Are there a lot of companies that produce the cores?"

"There are only five manufacturers."

"... Then how are the pirates getting them?"

"We don't know, but it's impossible for them to get the needed info from each company. But trees below the tenth generation are very loosely regulated, so it could be that they are using those in combination with an ordinary engine."

"We are also currently developing technology to use those trees as booster parts. We've been slowly rolling them out."

"So, you mean it's not just the 5 companies handling them anymore."

"That is correct."

"How are you doing maintenance on ZINV-Sama's unit? We may be able to fix it up for you."

"I will not let you or these manufacturers mess with ZINV, it's too risky ..."

"If you let them have it, they will give you many excuses and never return it."

"Yes, I know."

Souren nodded deeply and turned towards Seina. "So, what do you think of the situation now that you know about it?"

"To be honest, I'm surprised, this is not a very pleasant story to hear, but I must thank you for telling me."

"There is not much time to make a decision, but you still have till tomorrow to think about it..."

"Uhm.... well... I guess I'll help." Seina responded promptly to Souren.

"What?"

"As a member of the GP, I won't turn down those who need my help and if the trees are being used like that, I think that I may be the only one who can something, so please let me help you." Seina did not care whether Airi Seto, Mikami, or Hakuren wanted him to do this, he was doing this because he wanted to do this.

"Thank you, Seina," everyone bowed again.

"Because you have decided to participate, I'd like to talk about the matter of compensation."

"What? Like a reward?" Seina looked at Souren surprised.

"Of course, you will be working here, so you'll get a reward."

"I heard from the GP that this is being treated as a business trip, so my salary is already being paid."

"But we don't have a partnership with the Galactic Federation so there's no choice but to treat it differently from the salary paid from there. We don't know what kind of activities you will do and how they will be treated as part of the mission. However, the compensation you will be paid here will be from us. That way there are no tax problems under the laws of Renza..." Souren said, looking at Hakuren.

"Since there's no diplomatic relationship between the Renza Federation and the Galactic Federation, there are no laws related to taxation. While the GP has deemed this as being treated as a business trip for Seina, that doesn't cover how tax matters will be handled here."

"Our accountants are very eager for us to get this matter settled as soon as possible." Souren looked at Hakuren's group with a troubled face.

Looking at them, Seina remembered the face of Ringo. (Even in this world the accounting officials are no joke ...)

"But there was an unexpected blind spot, since your salary has been managed by Kiriko-sama up till now... ..." Hakuren said.

"I don't want to have to handle such things on my own, it would only cause trouble."

"Well, I imagine that's true. However..."

"What Commander Souren is trying to say is we have no choice but to give the reward to you, Seina, but in your case it's dangerous to have a lot of money due to your probability bias, and there are other reasons too"

"So, it's not just a matter of money?"

"We just don't want you to fall victim to fraud, or anything else that might happen. You are known for causing some very odd phenomena."

"So?"

"You're going to need someone to manage your money for you."

"Kiriko can't do it as she is a member of the Galactic Federation, and well... we can't do it either."

"Remaining neutral becomes a problem if we do, so we think it's best a third party does it, don't you?"

"Ok, then let's use Racepshi's service ... surely that will fix the problem ..." Souren launched Racepshi's business directory.

"... .. Oh, it looks like we are working with a financial organization called The MMD on the Galactic Federation side."

"The MMD!"

"Do you know about them? All we know about this is limited to our activities within Racepshi, should we leave it to them?"

"Yes, that would be preferable," Hakuren said as she looked to Seina for confirmation.

The MMD was originally a philosopher's asset management organization. Even now it was the most reliable bank within the Galactic Federation. Seina had no objections.

"OK then, that brings us to the next matter: What about the specific amount of compensation?"

"As this is an experimental unit, there is not much we can do about the pay rate, you will be paid the same as a member of the naval cavalry."

A displayed number was converted to what it would be worth in the Galactic Federation and presented to Seina. It was about a hundred times the base salary Seina made as a GP crew member.

"This amount is very small for a Master of a Godly Knight"

"No well"

"What Seina is trying to say is for now he will be fine with being paid that amount, but it is too low and will have to be adjusted later. Also, he wants to be treated like an operator of a Heavenly Knight." Hakuren, who realized that Seina was trying to say it was too high, prevented him from doing so.

"Oh, yes, that is what I meant... Other than that, it's fine for now." Seina felt confused, but he nodded towards Souren. Well, no matter how much money it was, he had no use for it. It would just go into his savings.

(I'm sure Kiriko will freak out when she sees that when it goes to the MMD.) Even though she was no longer handling the purse strings directly, there was no doubt she would be amazed by such an amount.

"Thank you, so we will delegate monetary affairs to the administrative department of Racepshi. Please fill out and submit to us the required documents later and we'll make sure you are provided the same working conditions as normal Heavenly Knight operator."

"Seina, I've already confirmed that there's no problem complying with the employment contract with the GP, but do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions about it or experience any inconveniences."

"We apologize for the trouble."

"When this experimental unit is officially made a full-scale operation, we'll review the terms and conditions again and renegotiate the contract. I think when that time comes, we will be able to give you more. I apologize for the inconvenience for now."

"Understood."

Now that the matter was settled, the tension in the room relaxed.

"Well then, let's talk about what we will do moving forward, Captain Sajyu, if you please."

Sajyu nodded to Souren and lifted the barrier around bridge. Sajyu moved to the captain's seat, Seina and others followed.

"First of all, we will go over the placement of each member on the flagship bridge. The front left is Seina, and the right is Kaguya, the high-level operator's seat in front is my favorite position but I'll leave it to Hakuren's group. Seina's seat, if activated by biometric authentication, will also be able to move up to the first level. At this time, are there any objections?"

"No... .. I think that will be fine." Seina sat in his seat, it seemed that the others had already sat and started up their terminals. Seina quickly activated his terminal by registering his biometrics. A registration mistake happened twice, but it was going well.

By the way Souren stood next to Seina because he had no seat.

"Well then... first off ..." Sajyu launched a monitor that showed the ship and the others. There were thirteen ships in all. "This is the capacity of our fleet; we will mainly be using the flagship. We have 2 escort ships, 2 cruisers for carrying the armored cavalry into battle, 4 destroyers, a reconnaissance destroyer, a machinery ship, and 2 goods transport ships. In any case, this fleet alone makes it possible for long-term non-port operation."

"It hardly compares to the Kamidake."

"Even so, it's more than enough for ordinary mission work. In a worst-case scenario, it should be enough to buy you time to withdraw if you encounter an enemy and your unit is destroyed. As long as you and Hakuren's team are safe, we can rebuild."

"I hope that will never happen."

"The basic battle method is more or less what you're used to, just replace the ships with humanoid weapons and that the fights are more or less one on one. There are several theories about how that battle method emerged, but mostly it's thought that it's a remnant from the era of the prehistoric civilization. The founders were greatly influenced by that after they found the original 5."

"If the battle is ultimately decided by a one-on-one fight, then isn't everything as good as settled as long as I have ZINV?"

"Well, that was biggest reason why they had such overwhelming power, but I agree with you. We shouldn't make ZINV fight unless absolutely necessary."

"I agree."

"Of course, even the most basic of current Heavenly Knights are able to oppose a small fleet on their own, depending on the operator. With someone skilled like Kaguya, we can easily win without resorting to using it."

"So specifically, how do you engage in a battle?"

"It depends on the scale of the battle, the location is decided by the commander who leads the battle, and they appoint a Heavenly Knight operator, so you will need to use your best judgment depending on the chosen battlefield."

"Are you sure that's a good idea to place me in charge of that?"

"You'll be fine, there's hardly ever any large-scale battles, and at worse we lose our cargo from losing the battle."

"Are you sure? I've heard though that recently there have been incidents of pirates with humanoids of their own."

"Well... That's why we have you, isn't it. It shouldn't be a problem. The fights are supposed to be one on one, but there is the issue lately of cross over."

"Cross over?"

"Well, there's going to be a lot of people who want to fight you just because you have a Godly Knight... But some of them might not play by the rules. We've been seeing a huge influx of foreign pirates who don't know or care to follow the rules. It's been happening more and more, but it seems like there's also a set of pirates who are very defensive about playing by the rules, so it's not without consequence but nevertheless, some refuse to do it. There's also the issue of fraud lately."

"Fraud?"

"There have been times lately when we've shown up only to fight a humanoid actually made of several of them fused together... They seem to be using an expensive KZM bio alloy to do it. Also, some of the units are sometimes equipped with magic users."

".....What!?"

"I understand your reaction, but I assure you it's really not as big a deal as you think."

"... Really? But you said magic?"

"Well, it's probably not what you're thinking of Seina-sama. See that plant we have in here?"

"What about it?" He had almost completely forgotten about them.

"It's a special plant called a Magic tree that generates and releases 'magic'. The enemy ships can use it to have their ship move instantaneously from one point to another."

"... .. But it's still magic, right? Can anyone use it?" Seina was excited like a small child. His eyes sparkled.

"Only if you have a magic organ in your body. Those who can use large amounts of magic are rare, and magic is incompatible with science and technology and those kinds of civilization in the

first place. For some reason in civilized area's where those things develop, it usually isn't found. I'm surprised you are familiar with the concept, maybe it's because you are from an early civilization zone?"

"Wait, why doesn't it grow in more advanced civilized areas?"

"We don't know, we think it's to avoid it causing friction in advanced civilizations that have developed. But we don't know for sure because there's a slight problem with it."

"Problem?"

"When put in an artificial container like this, safe breeding is possible, and bringing it to higher civilizations is not a problem, but the magic tree will dramatically change a planet's ecosystem if it's not stored like this. Transplanting is forbidden, and sometimes it even erodes the equipment holding it."

"Is that so ... that's too bad." Seina was a bit disappointed.

"But Seina, magic is kind of pointless ... you can do the same things it can do much more easily with science and technology, it's not like there is really much of a demand."

"Oh ... I guess... I've heard that magic is pretty much the same as highly advanced science and technology."

"It can generate fire; let you breathe in water and heal the human body Even if some can do that with magic, with science and technology all people can receive those benefits far more easily. But there are also exceptions, some magic is more convenient than technology, and that's why we cultivate the magic plant here."

"No matter what you say, the ability to teleport is pretty amazing."

"It is possible to move in an instant to places that take days by super spatial navigation. You need to use a lot of magic and those who can do that are quite rare, and it's not like they can do it without enough magic ... But we're off topic, fighting pirates who can do that is a pain," Sajyu said.

Seina wanted to hear more about magic, but he knew it was pointless because he wouldn't be able to use it anyways without a magic organ.

"I fell victim to a fraud battle recently and I was able to repel them, but it was an intense struggle. I barely escaped."

".....Ah, I see"

"If I ever find those pirates" Kaguya clenched her fist and her skin changed color.

"Relax Kaguya." Sajyu tried to calm her down.

“I'm sorry, regardless, seeing them fused together was pretty cool.”

“Enough of this, we need to see how Seina can fight before we go any further.”

“We should have Hakuren get the simulation up and running.”

Kaguya and Sajyu nodded.

Chapter Six: The Fairies' Banquet and Post-Festival

Ten hours later everyone was gathered together in a greenhouse like room.

"What kind of booze should we celebrate with? Oh, maybe some suicide liqueur." Sajyu transformed into a negligee like outfit reached into a stream and magically pulled out a bottle of liqueur to celebrate the formation of their unit and passed out shots as they drank and talked, they got progressively drunker.

"It's been five years since Ms. Hakuren went over there ... I wouldn't have believed what she was going to do if you hadn't come along?"

"Originally, she planned to spend well over a hundred or even two hundred years there."

"Well then, it's good she brought Seina and also that he agreed to help with the fight."

"Our battle is just about to start; we shouldn't act like we've won just yet."

"Even so, it's awesome that we're at this point."



"I just hope that our battles lead to peace"

"So.... Souren, I heard from some of the aristocracy that you're thinking about getting a sex change." Kaguya teased.

"What? Who told you that!?"

"Oh! So, it's true? Well, it's not a bad idea..."

With the technology level in space, complete feminization was possible. Besides that, one could also control a female type body as a separate body. They teased him about this for a while.

"Yeah, you should do it."

"That's not true at all! Why would I do that?" Souren got angry but still looked pretty while doing so, this only fueled their teasing.

"Oh, come on, I bet you'd make a cute bride..."

"Isn't it hard finding a girl to date looking like you do?"

"I know I look like a girl but other than that I am a very ordinary man!"

"Sure... I hear you're into housework ... In a way, you're more girly than most girls."

"I've been trained since childhood to keep my place neat, and I live on my own! What do you expect me to do?"

"... I expect you to get a sex change..."

"..... UGH...."

"I bet you could make it as a candidate to marry Seina if you did."

"....."

"Oh, you have nothing to say to that? Do you like that idea?"

"... I just have no will to argue with you anymore... Besides Seina needs to be handled carefully. Hakuren has her work cut out for her."

"It's really just cheaper to let the pirates steal things when you think about it. That's why our budget is so low right now. I think the only reason they are going along with this plan is because he has ZINV. His possession of it and her plan to bring him here is going to complicate things. I don't think the 5-house system will collapse any time soon but it sure isn't stable anymore."

"I hear Hakuren has given up her right of inheritance to the throne... but it seems Gyokuren is going to finally step up and accept the position as Queen. Of course, that secures Seina's position in a way. But now the only real power Hakuren has is dependent on having ZINV."

"I hope he doesn't end up having to deal with one of the powerful Knights I've heard they have, like HIMIK."

"Well, this is Seina. Things are bound to get full scale with him here. If HIMIK is real, it's just a matter of time before he comes out of the woodwork."

"I guess, we may even see the "shadow guild" that's been rumored to exist."

"The organization that's said to have influence not only on Renza's officials but also on the pirates? Do you really think such a thing exists?"

"I don't doubt it. The only question is, are they on our side or against us and what's their relationship with HIMIK?"

"Well, regardless, HIMIK should be worried about ZINV. If such an organization exists, they no doubt are worried about someone with that much power. Although you would think they would have anticipated something like that already."

"You'd think that if they existed, they would have done something to prevent this team from forming in the first place. Hmm... Souren, you should probably see what else you can find out about that for the time being..."

"Yes, I will keep that in mind from now on." And they kept chatting on through the night.

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The next morning, Seina woke up in a strange bedroom in a panic. "Eeeeeeeeh!" Souren was asleep clinging to him.

"What!?" Seina noticed that Souren smelled of liqueur, so he figured he came into his bed while he was drunk. Seina asked his sorcerer's stone what was going on.

"She seems to be ..."

"It's a he."

"Roger that. I have classified her as a male. His readings are difficult to capture due to an abnormality in his body, but it seems he will recover, he is in no danger."

"Abnormality? What do you mean?"



"It seems something has warped his body due to him having a biased probability vector. But I am reading no physiological abnormalities right now."

Seina couldn't move and debated in his head over whether or not he should confirm that Souren was a man. Because Souren looked like a pretty girl clinging to him it made him feel weird and so he had the Philosophers Stone launch a video of Acha and Fuku to distract him. It really didn't seem to be helping though.

"....."

And then. With a cute awakening voice, Souren slowly opened his eyes.

(AAH!!?)

It was like to gate to heaven had opened.

Seina was too taken aback to do anything. This was a surprise attack he was unprepared for. It was as if his soul had left his body.

(Ah ah)

His whole body became rigid with tension like he was caught committing a crime. Otherwise, he would have embraced him reflexively.

Souren instantly realized what was going on and jumped away while covering himself with a sheet. Of course, this was because he was a former member of Kaou royalty, and their royalty were trained not to show so much skin.

“Oh no! ... Sorry! Uhm... is it ok if I go take a bath, I can't exactly go outside smelling like alcohol.”

“Oh... yes... feel free to.”

Souren got up and went to take a bath.

Seina went out to the garden to collect himself and noticed the magic plants, they resembled a sort of vividly colored palm or banana tree. “Hmm, a plant that allows people to use magic...”

“I'm done with my bath, Seina you should hurry and wash up. I'll get everything else ready for today while you're in there.”

Seina was startled by Souren, he turned around to find him in a towel that was wrapped around his chest. The water had made his skin light pink and glossy. He couldn't think of him a man anymore. “Oh uh... yes... yes... of course...” Seina awkwardly headed to the bath.

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Seina thought that being alone in the bath would help calm him down. But the bathroom was filled with stone statues and engravings of realistic depictions of naked women with beasts and monsters. Of course, it was just really nice art, but Seina was a teenager, so it was pure eye poison. He washed up as fast as he could and got out.

“I made breakfast.” Seina was met with Souren in an apron dress making breakfast. Breakfast was curry though and the smell distracted him.

“So, how is it?” At that point Seina gave up on trying to see him as anything other than a woman and just went with it.

“It's delicious.”

“I also made dessert, try it.”

“What is this weird fruit? It's delicious!”

“Oh, it comes from the magic tree. It's a very useful plant and it's used for many different things.”

"I wonder if I can plant them in the Kamidake."

"You'd need an isolated space, or it would ruin the whole ecosystem."

"Washu said I could make as many new sub-spaces in my ship as I wanted, but I'm still not sure how..."

"You should consult an engineer."

"You know, you didn't have to make breakfast for me... aren't you a royal?"

"I'm used to it; I live on my own and do all my own housework."

"You're not a bad cook either."

sigh "And yet, I'm still single ... Well... Anyways, Seina, I want to apologize on behalf of the Kaou people. What you're trying to do in eliminating the pirates is an impossible task for us. Of course, I don't have any power to formally do anything, but if you need anything at all just let me know and I'll try and get it for you while you're here."

(Oh, I see now.) The reason he was over here was that he came to talk to Seina alone in person about this.

"Well, it may seem impossible, but nevertheless I've chosen to do it."

"Yes... however...." He hadn't really had much of a choice in being dragged off here.

"Where I'm from, I was a pariah. My bad luck only brought misfortune to others, but when I came into space my luck became an asset. I'm happy to help as long as my powers can be put to good use."

"Oh really?"

"Yes, so please don't worry about me."

"Oh, is that so... Then I'll do my best to help you make your power an asset, please... save us." Souren knelt before Seina and bowed.

"Okay, I'll do the best that I can." He answered strongly. At this time Souren was positioned as a special "person" for Seina.

"Thank you. I appreciate it."

*** * * Translators' note: I cut this thing down from 50 pages to like... 4... Kajishima should have done the same honestly. * * ***

Chapter Seven: Rondo of the Cat Fairies

"Good morning, Mr. Seina, Commander Souren." The staff greeted Seina and Souren when they showed up at the command center.

Sajyu and Kaguya were giggling.

"Oh Souren, you'd make such a wonderful bride."

"You really have no other choice but to become a woman."

"What are you two going on about!?"

"You were pretty drunk last night so we sent some faeries out to wake you up on time. They told us everything." Seina and Souren turned red.

"Seina and Souren were asleep in the same bed!"

"He was holding him in his arms firmly!"

"Seina and Souren both took a bath!"

"Souren made him homemade breakfast!" Small cat faeries giggled.

"Aaaaaaaah! Don't tell people that, you jerks!"

"Ahaha, you know how fast word travels from the cat faeries. I wouldn't be surprised if the whole base knows by now." What the cat faeries were saying wasn't wrong, but obviously their words were easy to misunderstand in such simple context.

"You realize being upset like that isn't helping your case." Kaguya pointed out. The female officials cried out as they began to blush and the wrinkles between the eyebrows of male officials were getting deeper.

(The female officers are all pervs, I see...)

"Well good luck, I hear his wives are all beautiful and talented. You've got some hard competition."

"Stop it already!"

"Oh wow, Seina.... you look surprisingly calm about all this."

"I'm just exhausted from all the surprises I've had this morning."

"Ahaha, I understand... By the way, the cat faeries have a psychic link with each other, so they can instantly share any information between them. It's useful for keeping an eye on things but well... it has some disadvantages..."

"Alone they're intelligent but as a group there a bunch of dumb asses. They have a lot of difficulty forming a united conscious."

"Are you sure you're ok to work?"

"Did you stay up drinking all night after you left Souren?"

"You're one to talk Sajyu, you still smell like booze."

"I don't decompose alcohol like you do! My body is different than yours Kaguya!" Sajyu looked embarrassed. She liked getting drunk, but the smell embarrassed her. She was supposed to be a seductress as a dryad but when she drank, she smelled like a sloppy drunk.

"By the way, how would you feel if there was a beautiful woman like me sleeping next to you?"

"I would never do such a thing!"

"Really, but I hear you live with women like Amane and Gyokuren? Are you saying you're immune to their charms?"

"I'm saying that Souren is different because he is a guy."

"Oh, I see. So, it worked out after all." Sajyu handed a coin to Kaguya. They had clearly been betting on something. Seina let out a sigh.

"Oh, I see, so this was all you two's doing."

"Well, sort of, we were just trying to figure out how we were going to go about finding you an escort."

"Escort?"

"Although the staff here has been picked carefully, there's no guarantee that one of them isn't a spy. There's the possibility that some people want to hurt you, so we need to assign you a bodyguard to escort you at all times."

"I don't need to sleep so naturally I nominated myself. But Kaguya didn't like that idea..." Sajyu said.

"That's like putting a wolf in charge of guarding a sheep! Leaving a man with a dryad like you defeats the point of even giving him an escort!"

"I would never stoop so low!"

"Yesterday you were completely out of control. Do you want to end up as firewood for my fireplace?!"

"No, I don't... So, I guess it's a good thing us dropping off Souren in his room worked out."

"You did that?"

"Souren was a good candidate; he can use magic and is also a master of self-defense, so we dumped him in there with you using Sajyu's sleeping magic."

"Oh, so that's what happened?"

"So, what do you think about having Souren as your escort?"

"Uhm... before I give you my impression, I think we better make up an excuse..." Seina said in a panic.

"An excuse?"

"Sajyu! Kaguya! What is the meaning of this!?"



They turned around to find Hakuren, Gyokuren, Karen, and Suiren angry and cutting off the only way out of the room. As usual, Hakuren was caught in a thought loop.

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Eventually things were cleared up and they agreed that Souren would make a good bodyguard for Seina. They then moved onto making proper living arrangements for Seina. They formed a new area on the ship for him in the Burst Squirrel and then went onto discussing strategy.

"I have no doubt about Kaguya's skill, but I'm worried what might happen when we're up against the 3rd generation humanoids of HIMIK." Hakuren said.

"What!" Kaguya and Sajyu were surprised to hear this.

"Is there a possibility of them coming out of hiding? ... No, of course there is, we should always consider that a possibility.... but isn't this a bit quick?"

"Last night, Gyokuren received a confidential report from her kingdom's main planet. It seems they are making some big movements lately, so be careful." Gyokuren's country had the weakest military of the 5 countries but the best intelligence gathering network.

“Even so, HIMIK is an unpleasant name to hear, doesn't it have the same name as the second-generation robot that fought against ZINV before the establishment of the prehistoric civilization? That would be bad if it's more powerful than a 3rd generation Wushin ...”

*** * * Translator's note: Wushin is a term occasionally used to describe the ZINV like humanoid like mechs. * * ***

“No, this is something different It was first seen almost the same time as when the Renza Federation was founded. It was not a pirate, it didn't belong to any country. It called himself the “The Maiden Knight HIMIK” to those who encountered it.”

“But didn't D say that HIMIK was destroyed by ZINV?” Hakuren said.

“I don't know about that unfortunately; I don't know if this is the same HIMIK that D has spoken about. It is unknown whether that even exists any more to begin with..., but there's no doubt that the Maiden Knight HIMIK exists, it is a quite powerful top-ranking Heavenly Knight, and lately it has been giving pirates high ranking armored cavalry.”

“If there is no problem with Light Hawk Wings, my Moonlit Night will not be lagging behind.”

“But I heard rumors it had Light Hawk Wings!”

“If it has Light Hawk Wings, it must be at least a 3rd generation!”

“We have no confirmation of that, all we know is people have seen it put up a very powerful shield we have never gotten proper recordings or readings on, so it is all conjecture. Unfortunately, we don't have much in the way of actual information on HIMIK besides eyewitness testimony.”

“So, what is the highest generation we have? Kaguya what's your Knight at?”

“It's a 5th gen unfortunately, getting a fourth or third is impossible for anyone but royalty.”

“Oh, is that so...”

“I have no doubt in my mind that if Seina sets our coordinates for a jump, we'll immediately encounter pirates or worse the Maiden Knight...”

“So, you think we're going to have to involve ZINV?”

“If the Maiden Knights Light Hawk Wings are fake... it shouldn't be an issue, but we don't know for sure.”

“But if they're real, that means they have an absolute defense...”

“Wait... do you not know about the Light Hawk Wings weaknesses?”

“What?!” Everyone but Seina said, surprised.

"If you get them to cover fire from every direction with three Light Hawk Wings, you can create a slight gap in its coverage and then you can target the gap. Even then you have to break through the ship's normal shields and it's difficult to pull off because you have to sustain a multi directional attack and hit the core of the ship which is very small and moves quickly. It's not that big of a disadvantage in long range fights like you have in the Federation but in close combat like we have with the armored cavalry it can easily become an issue," Kaguya said.

"Either way, we're going to have to be prepared to use ZINV if the Maiden Knight intervenes, but don't forget our main target is the pirates. They're prideful and most of them wouldn't even entertain the idea of accepting help from the Maiden Knight if it was offered. So, that's thankfully one advantage we have."

"What happens if we enter a battle and we lose?"

"Usually, they take our cargo as well as parts of the wrecked ship, they hold it for ransom or use it for repairs because they're so expensive."

"So, they don't take pilots hostages?"

"Not typically, pirates want money and handling people is a big hassle, our troops usually retrieve our pilots when we lose."

"Don't worry, if anything happens, we will handle everything for you. Only recently has anyone violated the rules of battle, but it's still not common."

It was like the implicit rules not to harm passengers in the Galactic Federation if the cargo was handed over.

"We're going to have to teach you all the battle procedures... We can rush through it, and we can use an accelerated space, but it's not like we can do it all in one day... So, for now, I think it might be better if we just let Kaguya get you familiar with piloting ZINV while we train you, if that's alright with you..."

"I can train you on Light Hawk Wing countermeasures while we're at it, if you like..."

"Well, I don't exactly have a lot of experience piloting ZINV, so I would be thankful for any training you could give me, but don't you think that's kind of dangerous?"

"To pilot ZINV?"

"No, I mean we might get caught up in my probability bias..."

"Is it really that bad?"

"I'd be fine if something went horribly wrong and it was just me, but I really don't want anyone else getting caught up in it. I can bear it, but ZINV can cause major damage very easily."

“Really?” They seemed confused because they had yet to witness any really bad examples of Seina's bad luck yet.

“Actually, I think that might make training even better, as long as I'm in my 5th generation Knight I should be able to avoid any life-threatening injuries.”

“I think we should lay off doing anything too intense, but I agree it could be good training. What do you think Seina? Ms. Hakuren?”

“Ok... let's do it.” Seina and Hakuren mutually agreed.

Chapter Eight: Godly Knights and Heavenly Knights

Seina and Kaguya engaged each other in simulated combat.

“Woah... .. Is this really ZINV?” Kaguya was overwhelmed by the sight of ZINV.

The mechs of her country were often dressed in flashy ceremonial decorations. They were, in a sense, also works of art. But ZINV was rugged and daunting. Its grey exterior gave it the appearance of a megalithic statue with a tremendous presence.

“So, this is it... the top-level Royal Tree... it’s amazing...” Souren was impressed too.

“... .. chh..., Ahahaha.” And while Sajyu was overwhelmed by its presence, she tried to remain calm and laugh it off.

“ZINV, please begin.” ZINV moaned and Seina was transferred aboard.

“That voice!”

“Oh!?” Souren's people were puzzled by the fact that the impression ZINV gave off changed so quickly. After transferring Seina, ZINV now gave off a gentle and friendly atmosphere.

“..... I see, Seina must be good with children.” Souren had imagined it was a brutal god of war. But now it seemed like an innocent child.

(... The impression it's giving off has changed considerably.)

Kaguya felt the same thing from ZINV she felt from her own Knight but much stronger. She felt ZINV's presence was lovable in a sense, and it made her feel a sense of disgust for how Renza's countries treated the trees and pitted them against each other. There was a gap between the pure childlike innocence she felt in ZINV's personality and the war machine they wanted to use it as.

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Souren and Sajyu, along with Hakuren, headed for a meeting with the main fleet and the five house auditors, Kaguya transferred to the cockpit of her mech. Behind the transfer gate there was a beautifully decorated gate and steps. Kaguya was dressed in a formal outfit that looked like a shrine maiden. She sat down in what appeared to be a throne in a temple but was actually her cockpit.

“Link.” A tremendous number of monitors were launched, they scanned Kaguya's personal data, and disappeared.

“Kaguya-sama. Thank you very much for renting from us today.”

“You sure are really enthusiastic about business.” Kaguya wryly smiled at the staff of Racepshi who was on the monitor.

"You're good to go, don't worry about it getting damaged, we have a rescue crew on standby." Racepsi had leased them a satellite planetoid for battling on, it was half the size of the moon and had for some reason been impacted here and there giving it a fairly distorted shape. "Give us a good show."

"It's just practice, don't expect an all-out fight."

"Well, I'm off, I don't want to keep Seina waiting... move out!"



When Kaguya moved Moonlit Night to a cargo ship for transportation, ZINV had already been loaded there. They took the ship to avoid causing a stir with the ships outside.

"Wow Kaguya, Moonlit Night is beautiful." Seina said, she blushed.

"Thank you." Kaguya's armored cavalry, 'Moonlit Night' was a beautiful female-type Knight. It was covered in red cord with gold decorations on it like Japanese warrior armor, the height was about the same as ZINV, but it seemed far more delicate. The additional armor seemed like a pure white kimono that looked like a traditional bridal costume.

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Seina watched her mech board the ship. (The first time I saw a Heavenly Knight I thought it was gaudy but seeing them on the flower passage, makes it look pretty nice.) Soon the cargo ship arrived at the satellite.

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The stage satellite confronted ZINV and Moonlit Night.

"It is truly a training match; it will be more powerful when it comes to production."

Kaguya rushed into battle mode at a stroke to the tremendous pressure ZINV encompassed, which was confirmed by confronting it.

"Although I said that there is no attack from ZINV, I still want to experience a little, can you do it as a fight without weapons?"

"I understand." An immediate response came from Seina. Even in live simulated battle, Seina would acknowledge it if he could not even knock-on Kaguya.

"Please get started."

"Roger that!" Seina responded and ZINV rushed at the Moonlit Night at the moment.

"Fast!?"

Kaguya just barely avoided a straight left hand from ZINV that came right in front of her without any preliminary movement. The simulated battle with Seina yesterday was played out between Armored Cavalry, but the opponent's intimidation and everything about him was off the charts.

"Here it is!" Kaguya quickly corrected the course of her senses, wondering how things could be so different. In any case, just the added speed and power of ZINV had raised Seina's fighting ability tremendously. Add to that the combat data that ZINV must have accumulated, and at that point, Kaguya had no time to spare, and the magical thought acceleration she possessed was automatically activated.

(You licked me a little, ..., but...)

Nevertheless, the difference in pilot experience was still significant. As Kaguya gradually became accustomed to ZINV's speed and power, she terminated the thought acceleration.

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"So, what do you think?"

"You're still using Jurai's fighting techniques."

"Doesn't it just make sense to?"

Long ago, along with Tenchi, he learned some of the basics as a self-defense technique from Katsuhito, which was tremendously helpful in avoiding crisis and he had relied on it since joining the GP. He mostly knew how to avoid and escape and that was all that was needed with pirates.

"No, it's not the best strategy. If you use better techniques, you can overwhelm your opponent at a much earlier stage."

"Do you think it will make me lose?"

"It shouldn't be a problem unless it ends up a rough battle, things are going to be one on one after all. However, your self-defense abilities are expert level. So, you won't end up in trouble on that end."

"I see, you're right. I don't have any real offensive training. I feel a bit like you've pulled the rug out from under me..."

"It's OK, I'll teach you as we train."

“In the Weak Knight class, the performance of the pilot depends on their physical ability. In other words, fitness is important. Being beaten by it is like being beaten by the pilot's body itself.”

“So, should I practice using a Weak Knight?”

“If you have time to spare, that would be best. But for now, you better focus on how well you use ZINV. We need to work on your movement and attack patterns. Fighting skill isn't acquired overnight. It takes long repetitive training and simulated fighting.”

“Was I at least, okay?”

“You're not the best, but you're pretty good for only one day of training. If the experimental fleet goes well, we might be able to get some fourth generation Heavenly Knights assigned to us, so you won't have to fight as much.”

They didn't want to impose a heavy burden on Seina to solve their problems. But for now, they had to rely on ZINV's performance.

“Now will you do me a favor and deploy your Light Hawk Wings?”

“Roger that!” To be honest, he wanted to learn to attack first, but this training was for Kaguya not him, he set his sights on releasing the power of ZINV.

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After the simulated battle, Seina and Kaguya returned home.

“Well, it certainly seems to me that there's a small gap in Light Hawk Wings, but still, it's pretty hard to exploit it.”

“In the battle with Tarrant, I was overwhelmed with high energy fire from all directions.”

“I might have to consult with the tactical staff ... ZINV truly is a Godly Knight, it has such an intimidating presence.”

“Yeah, but unfortunately my attack style is still unrefined.”

“... No, it's not just that... ZINV is weak.”

“Eh? But ZINV is a first-generation mech.” Seina was quite puzzled.

“No, it's not a problem with the power of the Tree, it's about the performance of the mech when it fights.”

“What do you mean?”

“In fact, the original Five only had the performance of the current weak Knight class. Over time we added refinements to the cavalry, and as a result, the current armored cavalry was born. But in the era of the great prehistoric civilization ZINV-sama was clearly meant for wide area battle.”

“So, it's weak in close combat?”

“It has its issues. It's like using a bow and arrow in a boxing match... It's just a different kind of weapon. A skilled pilot could compensate but you personally are going to have major problems.”

“But can't the Light Hawk Wings take on pinpointed attacks if I use it as a shield?”

“Of course, but don't forget about the Maiden Knight.”

(Oh right, it could cancel them.) Light Hawk Wings can be canceled out by other Light Hawk Wings and the first gen can only generate three of them.

“ZINV is going to have to undergo some major reconstruction... I can't help but notice though that you might know someone to talk to about that.”

If Washu Hakubi made him the Kamidake, there was no doubt that she could make a top-of-the-line Knight. He could also ask Airi, but he got a bad feeling and shuddered at what might happen if he did.

“That's not a bad idea, Philosopher Stone, will you tell Washu about the situation?”

It was possible to e-mail Washu via the Philosopher's Stone. Restrictions were set so that direct communication was impossible though because that would cause various problems.

“I have done so.” As usual it was a brief response.

“My last NB was kind of too chatty, but this one is a bit too quiet”

“Maybe you can have her fix that too.”

“... Well, for now, it's ok as it is. Philosopher's Stone, please let me know as soon as there's a reply from Ms. Washu.”

“Roger that.”

Although Washu was a busy body, she had a capricious personality, it was unknown when her reply would come.

(Well, the urgency now is a countermeasure against the maiden Knights, so there is no choice but to work with what we have now)

“Kaguya, do you think if something happened before then you would be able to pilot ZINV for me?”

“I don't want to be ZINV's master if that's what you are asking.”

“You could copilot, the seats big enough for two people.”

She smiled a complex smile, “It would be an honor to fight as ZINV.”

"Is it possible to get a second seat put in?"

"I've heard of doing that for reconnaissance or special aircraft, but it's not usually done for battles."

"Oh, maybe we can link together!"

"What do you mean?" Kaguya smiled.

"On my planet the mechs in our programs often fuse together to form a bigger mech."

"Hm ... well if you have no objections, I may consider the double seat form ... Yeah! Would you like to combine the cockpit cores with me and Moonlit Night?"

Seina couldn't tell if she was serious or joking.

"It will take some time for remodeling, but it should be easier than building a new cavalry body."

That was the moment when Seina and Kaguya decided that they would like to get to know each other a bit more.

"But if you like, I can see if we can figure out a way to link together."

A cat faery overheard all of this and miscommunicated it to Hakuren's group who came running in in a panic.

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Kiriko, who had gone out to the dock of the Kamidake, came back to her new office feeling a little dazed.

"Well, where were you? You sure seem busy..." Amane, who was forced to prepare the office, was a bit mad at being assigned to that task, but Marci's men were actually doing most of the work. It was being called an office, but it was actually an entire floor of a luxury hotel in the center of a prime location. The interior was solid wood, similar to Jurai, so Kiriko rather enjoyed it.

"I heard that a big package has arrived for us, but from where?" Erma said, while keeping her eyes on the monitor as she adjusted various equipment.

"Maybe it's a gift from someone on board."

"No ... It's from Jurai ... It's Mizuki's exterior parts."

"Why would they send us that now of all times?"

"Mizuki-chan only has her basic unit, maybe they want to dress it up for the future."

"Well, you are going to have to represent Jurai from now on."

Kiriko wanted to stop this conversation. She looked into Elma's monitor. "You don't need to be working on that, leave it to Marci's subordinates."

"I'm just making a schedule for the party today."

"I guess I should go get dressed."

*** * * Translators' note: There's actually a whole section after this of them at the party... I'm not translating it. Nothing happens. Literally nothing. There is almost no speaking, it's almost all exposition ... it affects nothing. This book is a dumpster fire writing wise. * * ***

Chapter Nine: Sudden Change, Too Soon Encounter

*** * * Translators' note: I consider this the start of a new episode. If I had to put a number on it, I'd say this is the 3rd episode so far. * * ***

Seina put in co-ordinates, and they all jumped. Everyone was on edge. They all expected the worst. They jumped out finally, "Report on our surroundings!"

"There's a reaction! From the energy mass ratio, it's definitely a battleship!"

"Really?" Kaguya said loudly.

Hakuren and others were relieved to know that Seina's abilities still worked in Renza. The ship was unregistered.

"There's no response to the S class full code signal! Assume it's a pirate ship!"

They deployed all their Weak Knights and began to attack the ship, but soon another ship came out of hyperspace.

"There's a ship jumping out nearby! It's from the Fire Kingdom! That's the Fire Fish!"

"We're getting an electronic communication. Stop all attacks... This is an order from a superior."

"Cease fire!" Sajyu ordered.

"We were in pursuit of that ship first. I'd like you to stop all battle actions promptly and hand it over to me." A fearless looking middle-aged man with Brown skin and red hair and a Kaiser's beard appeared on the monitor. He looked like a military aristocrat.

"Baron Kashuruna, we caught this pirate after we jumped, we should have priority. What is the meaning of this?"

*** * * Translators' note: This is Kamui Kashuruna Kasen from the end of GXP 14. * * ***

"This is a special mission of His Excellency Ichika Ensa Kasen! If you are dissatisfied, I will accept a duel. It would be a pleasure to fight the famous Godly Knight Z I N V! Hahahaha!"

At the mention of the name of the candidate for the next head of the family, Karen's expression turned sour as she was unable to interfere.

"The pirates seem to be putting out a signal of surrender to the Baron..."

"Fine, let's hand things over to them." They called back their cavalry and left.

*** * * Translators' note: This seems more or less to be a pre-intro scene typical of this show. * * ***

“UGH...” Souren said as he looked over the logs from the past month of pirate hunting. “Besides that one encounter on the first day we haven't encountered anything but warships belonging to the Renza federation!”

Their encounter rate was about once every 3 jumps.

“Well, we don't really know why he attracted so many pirates back in the galactic federations... But still, our encounter rate is amazing... I think it's still too early to make any conclusions about why this is happening though.” Hakuren said.

“Are there any commonalities in the ships we've encountered?”

“No, they have been from all 5 nations... and everything from private merchants to aristocrats.”

“They might not be pirates, but merchants and nobles always have something shady about them... I wouldn't be surprised really if that's it...”

“We need more time to collect more data.” Racepshi quaked around them. Racepshi was an entertainment ship... and an artificial planet... such a thing was never supposed to happen. Sajyu and Souren sprung into an alert state.

“Souren-sama!” An emergency communication monitor started, it was Ekushito, General Manager of Racepshi.

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Shortly before, Ekushito sent a communication to Hakuren.

“What do you think you're doing!?” Ekushito was standing next to the General Captain of the Racepshi on the bridge, staring at the large main monitor. All of the operators on the bridge, which was about the size of a dome stadium, were quickly sending commands to various parts of the ship.

“We're an extra territorial entity don't you know that?”

“Of course. But if you know our purpose, you must have foreseen this situation, right?”

It was only a processed voice, but the tone was dignified. It came from the seven Armored Cavalry on the monitor, the largest was Armored Cavalry sitting in the middle.

“Even if it breaks the non-aggression pact?”

“You must be mistaken. We won't touch Racepshi, but the insects that are roaming around the area, are they your customers?”

Running parallel to Racepshi, there were many privileged people who were waiting to check in to see Seina fight. These people had nothing to do with Racepshi because their reservations had

not been confirmed. Moreover, they were out of Racepshi's protective space, so Racepshi could not intervene even if they were attacked.

"But if you are holding these people hostage and trying to meddle with our customers, we can't overlook it."

"But what must be done to preserve the safety of your passengers... we have captured your guests outside the perimeter of your ship and are holding them hostage."

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"A battle with HIMIK?!" Hakuren exclaimed, befuddled on the bridge of the Burst Squirrel. Displayed on the screen was Ekushito and a Fleet of 7 high ranking armored cavalry units that were all over the 4th generation in power.

"It seems that 3 of them are 3rd generation but the one in the center... It's a second gen... Its power readings are just like Mikagami's in strength."

"So, what you're saying is.... That center one... That's HIMIK..."

"You'd need a 2nd gen to make all those 3rds... It seems like Seina's power is working after all... hahaha!"

"This is no laughing matter; this is like a major boss encounter in a videogame!"

"Hakuren, what are we going to do... it's all up to you..." Hakuren looked at the screen.

Seina talked to ZINV telepathically. "ZINV... Can't you put an end to this before anything happens?"

"No, no... The children... I can't hear them, they are already gone... they are blind and deaf to me, they're not children anymore." It screamed sorrowfully.

"Not children? What do you mean?"

"... Already ... already... I cannot see into their hearts. They are the same as dead."

"They're dead? What do you mean?"

"I don't know how to explain it... but they aren't children anymore. HIMIK.... Was broken... Same as me... I was broken.... I broke..."

"ZINV? ZINV?!?"

"That's why..... That's why... Forgive me.... I have to end this..."

"End this? You're going to fight?"

ZINV shut off the connection between them.

(End it? that means you're going to fight?)

Seina privately relayed their conversation to Hakuren, who seemed confused.

(Ekushito said he would let us decide for ourselves.)

(What do you think we're going to do?)

(It seems they have taken hostages from the Racepsi... I don't know how we should handle this, but I won't make a decision without consulting Kaguya first...)

"I already know what my response is... I accept their challenge." Seina said, out loud.

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"Is he crazy? He accepted?!" Makihi was confused when her husband told her the news.

"It seems so."

"What kind of advice did you give him?!"

"Nothing, I just told him to think more independently... I never could have imagined this would happen..."

"Should we tell Kiriko?"

"Yes... it would be best if you got on that right away. We don't need any unnecessary confusion."

"I understand, I will tell her in a bit... I'm just amazed... Is this really all because of Seina's power?"

"It sure has exceeded my expectations... I wonder how a daughter between him and Maya would turn out..."

"Well... hopefully we get the opportunity to find out..." A smile appeared on Makihi's face.

"Speaking of... We have two god like entities about to fight each other..."

"Yes... This will be the confrontation of the century... Let's get ready..." He smiled back.

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"Are you kidding me, you demon hag?!" Miki was quick to jump to confront Makihi at the news. Kiriko was surprisingly calm and Kirche was puzzled...

"Why are you letting this happen!? What if Seina dies, or he and ZINV are captured!?" Miki yelled. Kiriko seemed calm.

"There's nothing we can do... You realize we're up against a fleet of Royal Tree's... our defenses would be decimated, or did you not see the 6 other mechs floating out there..."

"Ehm..." Miki was struck dumb.

"Besides, Seina is well known for his power in the Galaxy Federation but here... he is doubted. He needs to show his power... if he doesn't, he'll be labeled a coward. All confidence in him will be lost. The experimental unit will be disbanded."

"... So this whole situation is stacked against him...? Isn't there anything we can do? The Kamidake is equivalent to a first gen and Mizuki is a second gen! If we can sync them with ZINV we can turn the tide of this battle in his favor!"

"Against a fleet of 4th and 3rd gens? You will end up blowing up half of Renza."

"So the entire Renza federation is a hostage too then..." Kirche finally spoke up.

"Ugh... damn it all... D do you know anything about that thing out there?" Miki asked.

D was staring at the monitor silently. Something was obviously wrong. "Why.... WHY IS IT HERE!?" D who wasn't a master of emotions seemed visibly scared.

"Do you know anything about that Knight HIMIK?"

"HIMIK That should have been destroyed by ZINV. It should have completely disappeared."

"So then, it's an imposter?"

"That certainly is HIMIK ... The same one as from the beginning of the prehistoric civilization, ZINV and Kazuki remained but it should have completely disappeared... Why is it here?!"

"I've been a bit curious to hear the full story, but correct me if I'm wrong... There was a planet named Earth a few hundred million years ago, and the world split into two parallels. After that, ZINV repaired it into one original world?" Amane shook D's shoulder and she finally turned from the monitor.

"Well Yes, but it wasn't a restoration, we eliminated the parallelization. Afterwards everything was changed a little bit and time and space began to recover naturally."

"If two worlds existed in parallel before the alteration, if ZINV disappeared in one, is that the other world's HIMIK?"

"... Oh!" D was shocked by this and clung to Amane. She turned pure white and her whole body was shaking.

"So what happened to HIMIK in the other world? What happens to those things without a pair when they become one world?"

"Didn't you investigate?"

"No ... No! As a result of investigating, Dr. Sanada found there was nothing wrong, so it was thought that ZINV had just modified itself and stabilized ... But it does not matter now."

"If HIMIK is a 2nd generation Imperial Tree, maybe it wasn't affected by the reformation... We will have to ask Washu or Airi. Either way there is something completely the same in front of us"

"So you've fought it before... Then battle data should still be in ZINV. That should give us an advantage."

"It should be. The memories were integrated between both worlds."

"So... it might have memories of HIMIK who isn't supposed to exist..."

"Ugh, enough of this! Isn't there anything you can do!?" Miki yelled at Makihi.

"This is a one-on-one battle, intervention isn't allowed. If it makes you feel better, there's a battle specialist on Hakuren's team."

"You know that's not what I mean you Devil hag!"

"I don't know what you want me to tell you... The Kamidake is not allowed to leave Racepsi."

"GaAAAah!"

x x x

"If he loses, things are going to get rough." Amane said. Kiriko looked around, they were watching the fight in the living room. Fuku and Acha weren't there.

"Where are the girls?"

"They're in bed, I've prevented them from seeing anything about the fight. We can tell them tomorrow morning."

"Good."

(Please... don't lose) There was nothing more Kiriko could do but pray for victory.

x x x

Seina got in the cockpit of ZINV and was waiting for a signal to start the battle. He wasn't worried about the battle... He was worried about the gaudy stage production part of the fight. "I thought I would be used to this after the fight with Seiryu... but... I can't take this seriously." Seina continued to watch HIMIK though the whole thing.

"I feel bad, ZINV has said that HIMIK was broken... It certainly doesn't feel like an Imperial Tree." What he felt when he looked at HIMIK in front of him betrayed what he knew about the trees.

"Wait..... What is that...?"

It felt like the essence of HIMIK could be seen like he had 'focused' in on it suddenly. It felt like "emptiness" ... was the best way he could describe it. A feeling like the embodiment of death.

“Ah!!!!!!!!!!!!!!” He felt a shiver go through him. His crisis instincts kicked in at the emptiness in front of him and terrified him. He was scared of losing everything he had gotten since coming into space. But he had no idea how he was going to face such a thing. The noise around him dissipated and all he could see was HIMIK.

“I see.” At this point Seina was able to understand ZINV's feelings. It was just emptiness there. There was no intention, no thought or feeling, it was like a singularity. A phenomenon of the elimination of existence itself. It was different from what he felt with Tarrant, but it was still a bad feeling. The moment he felt it, it became frustrating. He couldn't bear to see it anymore. The opening events were still going on, but Seina couldn't bear it.

— — Get it gone! Please make it disappear! — —

“Voo Ooh Oo Ooh ooo!!!”

“Gakuaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa!!” ZINV and HIMIK roared, and it shook the universe around them and in a moment the two Godly Knights disappeared in a flash.



“... Mia!?” Fuku suddenly woke up. Acha was still sleeping on the bed as she hopped off and looked around. She was overcome by a tremendous sense of loss and didn't know why. She soon realized her bond with Seina was broken.

“Miao! Mia!” Fuku became anxious and desperately searched for Seina using the Kamidake and she noticed ZINV fighting with HIMIK.

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“What happened?!” Ekushito yelled in the control room of Racepshi.

“They just suddenly went into battle.”

“Why have we lost the feed?”

“The energy they're outputting is too great. All the camera probes have been destroyed.”

“Sir, we are receiving a lot of complaints.”

Naturally this was a hyped-up battle, and their customers were not happy to not be able to see it.

“This is a fight between legendary gods, it's not like we could have expected this.”

× × ×

The battlefield had become a burning hell swirling in a torrent of energy like one would see in a newly formed universe. The long-range attacks from HIMIK had burst all over the battlefield instantly evaporating the camera probes.

“.....”

Seina was extremely concentrated and had dodged every blow so far. None of how he was operating could be attributed to experience, this was pure crisis avoidance instinct. The fight was immense, and it wasn't clear how much of the surrounding space would end up completely destroyed when the fight was over. Racepshi, the nearby solar system, even the galaxy could be taken out before this was over. First generation and second generation. The difference was orders of magnitude, but neither would give up. Their fight was physically tearing up space around them. HIMIK began to get closer after using long range attacks to try and form a hole in ZINVs Light Hawk Wings. Seina was curious as to why it wasn't just making dissipating them, perhaps they didn't know they could cancel them out. Suddenly HIMIK got closer but instead of doing an attack Seina anticipated it was getting ready to do something else.

“Wait... What is this?” A terrible chill hit Seina. In a quick moment, HIMIK emanated invisible but terrible energy, and ZINV guarded itself reflectively with the Light Hawk Wings.

(No!) As the energy touched the Light Hawk Wings, a tremendous light penetrated the Light Hawk Wings and enveloped ZINV.

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“What the hell is going on? Why can't we see the battle?” Miki yelled at Makihi though a video monitor, she had returned to the control room to deal with the situation. Next to her where two adjacent monitors with Kiriko and Hakuren's team looking angry.

“The cameras have all been destroyed... You're going to have to wait for us to fix it.”

“Screw that. We're using the Kamidake!”

At that time a great tremor from HIMIK hit the Racepshi.

“Guoooooooooooooooooooo!” That terrible growl spread through Racepshi as a tremor. Its voice was a painful thing of both anger and sorrow.

“Kamidake launch! Destroy the armored shield and go outside, Now!”

“HIMIK's other Knights have suddenly moved! There out of our sensing area ... it seems from the reaction data, two of them have joined the fight!” Operators yelled.

“The remaining two Knights are engaging in combat with the Kamidake!”

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“Myah myah myaaaaaaa!”

“Fuku-chan!” Kiriko's group went running into the bedroom with Fuku and Acha. Fuku was crying out in a frenzy, Acha was confused as to what was going on.

“What's going on, is Seina ok?”

“Kiriko-sama, what's going on there!?” Acha asked. “Fuku-chan felt something and took the Kamidake out to fight, Seina might be in danger!”

“The Kamidake is currently in battle with the Maiden Knights outside Racepshi. This will be bad unless we get her to hurry up and return!”

“No! If she stops battling in this situation the enemy will destroy the Kamidake or it'll be captured!” Amane yelled. The Kamidake was a mass of ultra-sophisticated technology. Even fragments were high in value.

“The Kamidake is trapped!” On the monitor that Ryoko launched into the bedroom, there was a video of one of the Knights holding the Kamidake in place as many armored cavalry came out of part of the captured fleet that should have been hostages. It was unclear if they were going to aim for the Kamidake or the Knight.

“This is bad! Hey Miki!”

“I'm on it!” Miki, Fuku, Kirche, and D all linked to the Kamidake at once.

“Miaaaaow!” The Kamidake began to spin at high speed.

“No way... is that the Guy Volg?”

However, contrary to the expectations of Kiriko, the appearance of Kamidake changed to a disk-like shape, distorted and dark. And a ring of dazzling light stretched from Light Hawk Wings of the Maiden Knight who held the Kamidake, the Knights and the cavalry surrounding them broke apart.

“What?! What did you do?”

“I do not know! I just did it somehow!” Miki cried out in a frustrated manner as if she was annoyed by Kiriko's question.

“Seina! Where is he!?” As if responding to Amane's words, the Kamidake jumped.

“... HIMIK!” The Kamidake jumped out to the space where the tremendous residual energy was, but it could only detect HIMIK and one of the Maiden Knights who had lost half their body.

“Miah miah miah!”

"Where is ZINV? Is this a joke?"

"We will just have to ask them!" But HIMIK and the Knight detected the Kamidake approaching and made a quick emergency jump away.

"Shit, he got away!"

"Everyone! Please! Return the Kamidake now!" Makihi said from the monitor.

"We haven't found Seina yet!"

"No, Miki! It's impossible to investigate any further, leave a scanning probe and bring the Kamidake back."

"....."

Miki and Kirche were looking at Makihi and Kiriko, they moved to Fuku who was still crying while watching the monitor.

"Mia! Miah!"

"... Fuku chan." Miki softly approached Fuku and picked her up.

"Seina is okay, we've had many dangerous encounters, and he's always made it through. Remember when you were caught by Tarrant? Didn't he pull through and come to help us?"

"Miah ..." Kiriko wiped Fuku's eyes.

"So this time we'll be the ones to search for Seina, with everyone. We'll work together to find Seina, so be patient for now."

"Miah?"

"It's okay, he'll be safe, Seina has ZINV too, remember?" Kiriko took Fuku over to Acha and Acha understood and petted her.

"Miah!" Fuku calmed down.

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"Oh wow, all of us are here."

Hakuren's side and Kiriko's side had all been gathered at Makihi's private residence. It was the first time since the wedding. They seemed a bit surprised by Souren and his group, but they were more concerned about Seina.

"We managed to capture this." Makihi brought up the ZINV HIMIK fight on a screen.

“Eh!?” The attacks from HIMIK ceased for a moment, and in the next moment, a tremendous light was generated inside the Light Hawk Wings of ZINV. After the tremendous light, a visual impairment came on the screen, ZINV vanished and HIMIK was half-destroyed.

“No...NO WAY!”

“No, I don't think it was destroyed, the readings we got were too weak for that. It seems he jumped away.”

“This is the energy map of the attack.” What Makihi displayed was exactly what the Kamidake had done earlier against the Knights it faced.

“What is this?”

“Well, it seems to be the same thing your Kamidake used...”

A thing like a black lump was injected from the front of HIMIK when the attack stopped briefly, as soon as it touched the light hawk Wings of ZINV, a strong light streak went towards ZINV.

“That's the PKW! Why is HIMIK able to do that!?” Kiriko had gained knowledge of the PKW from Seto's data bank shortly after being made a royal. Naturally Hakuren's people knew nothing, but Miki knew.

“Kiriko, do you know what this weapon is?”

“Before Ryo-Ohki, there was only one case where a royal ship was destroyed. The former Shank Guild made a weapon, a wave that passes through the Light Hawk Wings and damages the ship.”

*** * * Translators' note: Trivia commentary: Open up your OVA 3 plus DVD. Watch the extra of the girls explaining Tenchi concepts. They implied in 2003 that the Chobimaru, that big golf ball monstrosity the Kuramitsu's took to the Earth, was made specifically to do this attack against Jurai. And here it is, over 15 years later before it's finally published in the story. The more ya know! * * ***

“Such a thing exists? Why do they have it!? How did they get it?”

“Doctor Clay...” Miki said. She looked blue in the face.

“Oh! The data that was kept secret in Tarrant's base!” Miki had said in a report that she had traded some data for Dr. Clays help.

“If I hadn't ever made that deal...”

“That is only one possibility, Tarrant had that information the whole time. There is no guarantee they didn't sell it to someone on their own. Many others may have that information.”

“But...”

“Even if it wasn't, you did it to save all of you... and besides... it seems Seina is safe...”

"If they did get it from Clay, it's the best clue we have to finding the identity of its pilot. And now that we know they have it, we can come up with something to help Seina if it happens again..."

Miki silently nodded at Kiriko's words.

"We have to verify the data of what happened to find him. Can we have a copy of this data?"

"Yes."

"Please give Hakuren a copy too."

From here on, Kiriko demonstrated her real power. The data provided by Racepshi was combined with the data collected by Kamidake and analyzed with Kiriko's systems in Mizuki. The result came back only a few minutes later.

The image was clear.

"Kiriko-sama I'll consult with you later about doing something with this for me." Makihi who saw Kiriko's video analysis technology was high precision made a note to make negotiations to buy a copy of it for emergency cases.

"Wow, this is so sharp. You can see it offsetting the Light Hawk Wings."

Only one of ZINV's Light Hawk Wings disappeared, and in that moment, ZINV launched a counterattack.

"What did Seina do?"

"Well, if you look closely, ZINV is shooting gravitational bullets and then it seems he immediately left with an emergency jump ..."

"But how did he do it so quickly ..."

"He probably perceived him coming. The real question is, how was he not intercepted by the other Knights?"

"Look... Just before that, just before ZINV-sama jumps, something was shot at HIMIK and his Knights."

"Ohhhhhh... no doubt about it that's the paint what took down Kamidake No. 1." Amane said with a smile, Kiriko and Hakuren gathered to look and smiled.

"Well played, Seina!"

"At this point, he was safe. They would have been in serious trouble if they followed him."

"Then he's definitely safe. Let's hurry up and go look for him!" Kiriko caught Miki, who tried to stand up, and turned her eyes toward Hakuren.

“Hakuren, I leave this up to you. As I imagine you will be the only one able to do anything for a while.”

Miki remembered the situation and sat down in the chair.

“Thank you. I'll do my best.”

Hakuren's and Souren's groups immediately left from Makihi's place. Kiriko took big deep breath.

“What is the problem, why can't we do anything?” Miki asked.

“Currently, there is a demand from the Renza Federation for immediate delivery of the Kamidake, our various battle actions have violated their airspace, which is a felony criminal act. Informally, the Galactic Federation has already made an offer to make an apology and deliver them compensation. But who knows.”

“They only want the Kamidake?”

“Well, it wasn't you and Kiriko-sama out there, but they know you are connected in various ways. To be honest, all I know is that we can guarantee that we will protect you.”

“I am sorry, but that guarantee is impossible for us to make.” Ekushito showed up and gave a hardened expression. Makihi saw that look and sighed as if she had already given up on the situation.

“So, you're going to hand over us, isn't this a place of extraterritoriality?” Kiriko stared firmly at Ekushito. The others stared in the same way.

“As a customer, we will protect you to the very last of our ability, within the scope of protecting you from the law here, or we would. Unfortunately, everyone seems to have deviated from that policy.”

“What do you mean? Is that the decision of the board?” Makihi stood between Ekushito and Kiriko and intercepted the interaction between the two.

“Although it was tentative, the investigation meeting was to be held on Racepshi, but they won't let us do it there.” The moment they came out of Racepshi, they were as good as arrested. However, if it was done on Racepshi, they would have been safe.

“Why? Can't they listen to our defense here?”

“If they had relations with Galactic Federation maybe, but they don't want to do that. We have to turn you over. Unfortunately, we are still in their air space.”

“Don't we get a lawyer?”

There was also the possibility of false charges as they didn't know the law here. Of course, it was true that the battle occurred illegally in Renza space, but it was also a fact that it was an emergency.

“Since they have no such relations with the Galactic Federation, we will be in charge of that. If you need a lawyer, please let Hakuren-sama know about it. We will be monitoring your call, so please keep that in mind.”

“I understand.” While relaxing her facial expression, Kiriko still kept an eye on Ekushito.

“Oh, yeah, and it may be a good idea to change into something more in line with the fashion style of Renza before you go.” Ekushito said.

*** * * Translators note': PS, this is the last we hear from them this book. Except the afterword which seems to take place when Kiriko first sees Souren. * * ***

Chapter Ten: Alone in a New World

"That was dangerous, if I hadn't noticed what was going on, I would've been toast." Seina breathed a deep sigh in ZINV's cockpit.

"ZINV, are you ok?"

"Yes. But I'm afraid I'm mostly no longer usable. I'm having trouble regenerating ... I'm sorry."

The lower body of ZINV was almost blown away, the left arm was also damaged intensely, all of those weapons were unusable, but the right arm and some weapons were left.

"It's okay, I'm sorry about getting you involved in that."

"ZINV was born to fight. So don't worry."

"... .. That's... uh well... Let's just think about the future for now."

ZINV had always been treated as a weapon, it was no wonder it thought of itself in such a manner Seina could say nothing more.

Seina knew that he had also gotten hit with a marker bullet when he hit HIMIK and knew it wouldn't be following them easily. For a first-generation ship, ZINV was relatively safe in doing a hyperspace jump with the paint, but he remembered how the bullets had taken down the Kamidake one and shuddered. He soon decided to jump out of hyperspace and immediately encountered a pirate fleet.

"I'm sorry but I have no other choice, ZINV fire a gravity bullet."

ZINV fired a bullet that destroyed the entire fleet and then Seina had ZINV eject its core from the exterior shell and self-destruct to get rid of the paint. He now only had the essential core of the cockpit left. He could now easily move and shield himself, but fighting was out of the question. Even with his first-generation tree he couldn't risk it.

"We need to find somewhere to land." Seina thought for a bit and recalled something Souren had told him. His sister was stationed on a small frontier planet near where Seina was. He decided to go find her to get help.

Seina thought for a bit, "I can use the Philosophers Stone to contact Kiriko or Hakuren, but Kiriko is stuck on Racepshi and there's no guarantee they aren't all being watched. I could end up accidentally giving up my location. I could try Washu, but she hasn't responded to any of my messages yet... in any case I have no choice but to hide until things cool down... I just need to find Souren's sister and lay low... Philosophers Stone, calculate the route there."

"Calculation completed; we should be there after this next jump."

"Alright... go ahead and do it. ZINV I'm going to take it easy for a bit." Seina warped his seat into a cozier position and took a nap.

"Arriving at the target location. Execute awakening processing."

Since the stone was installed in Seina himself, it was possible to control his body. Of course, it couldn't override Seina's will, but it could make him move to protect himself when he was unconscious.

"... Oh, have we arrived?" Seina was completely awake within a moment.

"We have arrived at target planet Barrium." The stone pulled all the information it could on the planet and dumped it into Seina's brain instantly.

(Hmm, it's a frontier planet. It functions as both a space port and an army outpost. It's going to be tricky getting down there. We're going to have to sneak down to the surface.)

"I'm not sensing any scientific reactions..."

"Is it uncolonized?" There were four large continents that stood out on the image of the planet. One of them had little green and a large desert that stood out. The other continents and islands were a surprisingly deep green. Although the polar cap was covered with ice, its area was quite small.

"No, I can confirm large settlements and civilized areas, but lots of magic trees. It must be a magic-based civilization."

"Hmm, so we just have to get through basic air defenses."

"Let's enter using inertial navigation. At worst, if they see us, they will think we are space debris or a comet."

"Alright, set a good landing point and let's do it."

They landed by a lake in an uninhabited area. Seina waited until morning, confirmed the air was safe to breath and got out.

"ZINV, will you be ok staying here?"

"Yes, but please come back to pick me up soon."

"Sorry to have to leave you like this." ZINV's core was big and would have stood out quite a lot if he had it follow behind him. He took a survival kit and left. ZINV hid itself under the lake.

"I wonder why ZINV wasn't able to get any good map readings of this area. Maybe it's because this is a magic planet." He remembered what he heard about how science and magic were pretty incompatible.

Seina tried to figure out how he was going to survive through the jungle, he only had a knife and a laser gun.

"Do you have any info on the magic plant?"

"It's safe to eat."

"Then this shouldn't be too hard." He test fired his laser to make sure it still worked. "Alright, it looks like it's still functioning and has a range of about 10 meters. I still have to be careful not to cause a fire."

"There is a village about 200 kilometers from here. You should make it in 3 days with your bio-enhanced body."

Seina looked around the lake and found a green sheet of plants floating in the water. He pulled it out and threw it on himself as camouflage.

"Will I be able to get back here if our sensors aren't working right?"

"Yes. I have enough data for us to get back here easily."

He headed off into the forest.

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"... ... What!?" About three hours later, Seina started feeling strange, like he was catching a cold.

"Philosophers Stone, what's going on?"

"Not detecting any poisoning or bacterial infection, detecting a rise in temperature. Cause is not identifiable." That didn't help Seina's anxiety any. "Your pulse is increasing, and your breathing is disturbed, I suggest you rest."

Seina heard something rustle in the grass nearby. He saw a small humanoid come out of the trees about 50 meters ahead.

"A child?... No... a ... goblin?"

Its eyes were big and its ears were sharp, and it looked ghastly, and it had a few friends who looked slightly different but similar to it. They had bone and tree-based weapons with them, so it was clear they were intelligent. But one also wore what was clearly a human skull as a helmet. He wasn't surprised goblins existed, but since he hadn't seen any in his experimental unit, he decided to be weary of them. But because they seemed intelligent, he wanted to avoid having to attack them.

(It's possible they have human rights and property rights here, or maybe there protected creatures. I don't want to get in any trouble if I can avoid it)

"Have you figured out what is causing this cold yet?"

"Cause unknown. Poison or virus not detected. Body function is also normal. Most likely possibilities are magic. I recommend you get to safe place to rest immediately." Although his fever had increased, his head was still clear, thanks to his bio-enhancement.

He waited for the goblins to spread out and tried to sneak past them, but he had bad luck and was spotted. He ran off at full speed and they followed him.

“Be careful, they may be leading us into a trap.”

As expected, he was ambushed by a group of goblins in front of him. But he scooped them up and threw them behind him and kept on running.

“Gagyagyi!”

(Am I running right into their territory, they don't stop coming?)

The Goblin's high-pitched screams were coming from here and there as he ran, until suddenly a huge creature jumped out at him. It was over two meters tall and had a body like a gorilla but the face of a wild boar with two thick fangs, and thick arms. It lunged at him, but he used something Kaguya had taught him and used the things momentum against it and flipped it over him and into the goblins behind him knocking them down like pins. Then he ran off. He could hear it roaring behind him, but it didn't seem to be following him.

After that he ran into goblins 3 other times and once into a strange dog headed monster. But he kept running away.

“Goblins... orcs... kobolds?” He had to find a place to escape to quickly where he wouldn't be found. The goblins seemed to have a good sense of smell, his attempts to hide hadn't worked. He decided to climb a nearby tall tree after rubbing himself with things in the forest to blend in with their scent. He assembled a hammock and got in it. It was sealed like a body bag and made out of a special material so he wouldn't have to worry about falls or attacks or pests.

“Have you identified what is causing this fever yet?”

“Poison and viruses were not detected. An abnormality in your body is highly likely due to high heat. The energy accumulated in your body is being consumed faster than normal. You should double your usual caloric intake.”

(In that case, I'd better collect food in the jungle after this) His emergency kit had 10 days' worth of food but if he doubled it, it would only last 5. Luckily there was plenty of food in the forest.

“I'm just glad this isn't a desert.”

“We should arrive at the nearest city in two days.”

“Oh, good.” Seina ate double servings and went to bed.

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It sounded like noise, and like raindrops.

【*****】

It seemed like he had tinnitus since the fever began. He could hear it as he lay in his hammock.

【*****】

(I'm burning up.)

【*****】

(And it feels like I swallowed a hot mochi and it's stuck in my throat.) It was annoying him.

【*****】

Of course, he still heard the noise too.

【*****】

"Inducing sleep to preserve strength." With the power of the stone, Seina started to breathe slowly. Early in the morning of the next day. Seina woke up because of the stone.

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The tinnitus was still there.

"The situation remains the same. Three times during sleep, goblins approached, but they left. There were no other abnormalities."

(OK, I will leave after I eat.)

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About six hours after departing.

"I wonder why there are so many goblins here." He had encountered hundreds so far. Of course, there was also lots of food in the forest and small animals, but the number seemed way too high. "Maybe they have a settlement nearby?"

"I can't tell."

"Is there any change in my physical condition?"

"No poison or virus, no damage to body from the heat. 5% decline in functioning due to fatigue, eating is recommended."

He had eaten plenty over the last few hours but decided to stop and eat some more. He wasn't worried about being snuck up on because thanks to his bio-enhancement giving him echolocation skills he was able to even walk without looking. He decided to sit and take in his surroundings.

He managed to sense a herd of goblins being hunted by a large animal. They were running his way. He didn't run however, and soon the animal came out and the goblins ran past him and hid. He took out a spear and stood and faced the animal.



It had a body striped like a tiger and a face like a monkey. It roared at him to intimidate him, but he pulled out the laser and shot it in both eyes. He only hit one though. The chimera turned his face away in pain and Seina used that moment to run away.

When the chimera turned around, all it found were the goblins there. However, Seina hadn't escaped, and he heard it happen as he had actually gone and hid behind a tree hoping it would get the goblins and leave. But the chimera sensed him and chased after him. He was having trouble shaking it off of his trail, so he decided to shoot its front tendons and make it unable to chase after him, but it did nothing. It still ran at him very quickly. It swiped at him and knocked him over. In a last-ditch effort, he took out the battery from his laser gun and threw it at the chimera. It exploded when it hit the creature and the chimera went limp for a bit as Seina struggled

to get up. But soon it also got up and followed him.

"Do you want some help?" A small dwarf came out of the brush and asked.

"Please!" He went and hid behind a tree.

"Activate the traps!" The dwarf yelled, holes in the ground opened and the chimera fell in. Six people came out and surrounded the hole. They speared with what seemed to be enchanted spears as it tried to crawl out of the hole.

"That was a quick take down."

"It was already half dead."

"Who did that?"

"That man hiding in the shadows, he's alone."

"Just one person?!"

The chimera tried to get out and they speared it one last time and it died.

“Wow ... and this is a pretty large chimera.”

They were wearing leather and metal armor and they had swords, bows, sticks, and spears. There were dwarfs, elves, and a beast man. Seina felt like he was in a fantasy movie.

“It’s OK to come out, it’s dead.” But Seina had passed out.

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“Hmm, this thing is really beat up. Its eyes are damaged and so are its tendons and its brain. It looks like some goblins were fighting it off too. Is he the only one?”

“Just him. There’s no sign of anyone else.”

“Hey, look at his clothes and equipment. There’s absolutely no mistaking it.”

“Hmm, well he has no guild tag and no ID so it’s very probable.”

“Is that so?” A woman elf whispered something to a male elf.

“If that’s so, we should hand him over to the authorities.”

“No, I don’t think we should.” A dwarf came to check on Seina’s medical status.

“He seems to have caught a magic cold.”

“A magic cold?!”

“Those from space never get those. Well sometimes, if they’re under 5, but he’s an adult.”

“And yet he has one...”

“A man who can take down a chimera this size by himself can be useful. I think I’ll keep him as a pet. Let me take care of him. Don’t tell anyone about this.” Barigaru said.

“Hmm, ok, but only if we get increased shares.”

“Fine but leave him at least 30%.”

“Well, even with a 30% loss this thing is in good condition. I’ve got complaints.”

They all nodded gratefully except for Kikucha.

Chapter Eleven: Fantasy, Fantasy

【*****】

Despite losing consciousness, Seina heard the noise. “What do you mean?”

Because he couldn't move, he was in a state of pure thought. All five senses were lost.

“Hey, Philosophers Stone, do you know what is going on?”

“Status unknown. You seem to be experiencing something similar to an Astral Link.”

“An Astral link? Who am I linking to?”

“Unknown.”

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“Hey, Philosophers Stone You sure are quiet. My previous NB was very noisy, but you've said nothing more than necessary.”

“

“No I don't want you to be that noisy, but can you do something ...?”

“

“Please react normally. Your silence is very painful in this state.”

“OK. I will shift to normal conversation mode.”

“So, this situation is similar to an Astral Link, but who am I linked to?”

“I cannot reach a conclusion; a high possibility is a magician.”

“So, this thing is sentient?”

“The same regular patterns usually found in words can be seen in this noise.”

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【*****】

“That said, it doesn't sound like it though. Is sorcery like a catalyst for using magic?”

“Think of the magic as creating a barrier-type system that supports it. It's like the electrical system on the earth. If you access a terminal of the electric grid, you can use various kinds of electronic equipment and home electric appliances. Of course, if you expand the interpretation, the universe itself can be said to a sort of grid.”

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“Maybe, there's something it wants to tell you?”

“That's a possibility.”

“Do you know what it is talking about?”

“I cannot link this noise into my translation function. I have not deciphered much content.”

“You can't link to it?”

“I assume that this is due to compatibility issues with this magic civilization, it's an invasive function. However, there is a possibility it will respond to Seina's words. Why don't you ask it?”

“I hear you tell me what you are talking about, can you translate your words?”

That was half a joke.

【***** the origin* Strong ** Image*** embodied **】

“Huh, what is that?”

【** the origin of magics power is the strength of one's own imagination】

That noise began to make sense suddenly.

【The possibility of magic is unlimited; Magic has a million sources】

【The Magic can change anything, Magic is anything】

【You can listen to the magic】

【Magic remembers everything】

【Change. From ignorant. To wise】

【Propagate your seeds. To the earth. To the stars. Fill the universe. My children, build a paradise】

The astral link with Seina expired, or rather the explanation was over, and the mission was fulfilled. The words could not be heard, they had sunk into Seina's consciousness and his body in the dark.

“... .. Were you able to get it to convert its speech?”

“..... You mean you didn't hear that?”

“..... No.”

“... .. Do you think I should make finding its source a part of my mission?”

“..... Certainly, if it interests you. I don't see why not?”

“..... Roger that.”

“.....? What?”

“... .. Receiving data analysis consent.”

“Block access. Modify program structure.”

“... .. Via Confirm the points. Access ... Erase confirmation.”

“Engage Confirmation. No abnormality The whole process is finished.” The stone went silent. Seina woke up.

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“... .. Ah, this isn't a hospital!” Seina woke up, not to a hospital bed but to lumpy futon and stone ceiling.

“Oh! Finally, you woke up ... and I thought I've been sleeping too much lately. Gahahahaha!” A dwarf, who was called Barigaru, said.

"... Good morning. Thank you for your help." Seina raised his body and bowed his head. "I'm accustomed to waking up in strange places due to major injuries."

"How does one get used to such a thing? Are you older than you look?"

"No... I turned 17 earlier this year Oh, I just remembered I'm behind schedule, I'm"

Seina carelessly was about to give his full name but stopped himself. "I'm called Seina, are you Barigaru?"

"Woah. I'm surprised you remembered my name. You lost consciousness so quickly after we took down the chimera ... So you're 17... You're still just a little boy."

"Please don't say such things" Seina said what he said because he did not like being treated like a child, it was unusual for him these days. The number of things he had been through up till now hardly qualified him as such.

"Would you prefer I refer to you as an adult? You don't look old enough to grow facial hair let alone wake up to a pretty girl elf by your side. Gahahahah!"

"Ha ha ha ha With my bad luck, it's more likely that I would wake up sleeping next to super beautiful elf and she would be a man."

"Hmm... What's that, sounds like you got a long story to tell..." Barigaru said. A tea pot whistled, and he went and got it.

"If you're hungry, have some stew." Barigaru offered. He took out a medium-sized pot with both hands. It was enough to feed a fat family of four.

"Oh, thank you." Seina dug in, resisting the urge to eat it voraciously.

"Boy you have a lot of self-discipline, your internal organs have just been enhanced, it's okay to eat normally."

"Enhanced?"

"You passed out before we could tell you. You have what is commonly known as a magic cold, it resembles a high fever, but actually it's a fever you get when a magic organ is formed."

"What!?"

Barigaru placed a mirror in front of Seina. His face had a skeleton-like appearance. Although he imagined it from the appearance of his hand, it was still quite a shocking sight.

"The organ is formed by energy in the body, you've been asleep for the past twenty days from that.

*** * * Translators' note: This means we're over a month and a half into this arc. * * ***

"....." Seina stopped eating.

“What's wrong?” He glanced at Seina when he stopped eating.

“Oh, nothing” Seina ate and ate, but still felt pretty hungry.

“Your hunger will go away soon ... Once this is over, you'll be normal again, well, except you'll have a magic organ... Well, you might have something a bit more special going on... but I don't know...”

“Is there something wrong?”

“Ordinarily, it only lasts three days, at most a week. But it's been twenty days since you've passed out, and your fever hasn't receded yet. Your magic organ is still growing.”

“Is that bad?”

“Well, a magic organ is the organ needed to accumulate magic energy and is needed to do various magic things. That is, it's the organ needed to use magic. There is a possibility you'll be able to use quite strong magic”

“Does using strong magic come with any danger...?” Seina, who was used to having bad luck, somehow felt weary of Barigaru's words. Strong power attracts many things. Good and evil.

“Well, it's not as bad as it was in the past but Oh, well I'll tell you more about it later, now isn't really the time.” He waved his hand with an exaggerated gesture.

“If your belly has settled down, maybe you should go and check out the town. Ahahaha!” He began to laugh with a splendid laugh and swayed his hand like a conductor.

“Eh!?” Seina's bed floated up in the air and moved to a large window. There was nothing special about this technology in the universe, but it was a very strange feeling to see this in an old stone European type building. The curtain opened automatically, the window was opened wide, and the outside scenery flowed brightly into Seina's eyes.

“... Wow!”

“Not half bad a view, right?”

“... Yes, it's beautiful.”

They were in a building of an ancient capital made of stone and brick. People were riding dragons as if it were horseback riding. On the street there were armories and guards in various costumes. It was right out of the Middle Ages. It was just like a movie.

Afterword - Concluding Theater Part 12

(an Elf! ah! ah! ah!!!! ah!!! ah!!!! ah !!!!!!! ah!!!) Kiriko screamed internally. It was a voice of great joy, just like Seina when he first saw space.

Seina was missing. The Kamidake had just jumped out of Racepshi, and an emergency situation meeting was occurring at Makihi's place. This was her first-time meeting Souren, Kaguya, and Sajyu.

Kiriko's interests before coming into space was not just limited to Seina. She lived as an ordinary girl and had normal hobbies.

Because she was from a single parent family, Kiriko had been doing housework from an early age to help Tsukiko. Cooking and handicrafts became her hobbies, but reading was also one of her hobbies. The house was not particularly poor, but still Kiriko used schools and nearby libraries to get books. Her favorite genre was "fantasy".

Leaving Earth and going to Jurai was enough to stimulate Kiriko's love of fantasy. But her only disappointment was that there were no fantasy residents there. (An Elf! an Ogre! a Dryad! eeeeeee...)

But now here, the inhabitants of that adorable fantasy existed in front of her. Of course, her primary concern was the safety of Seina, but she would have forgotten what she was doing and rushed over to them if it hadn't been for that.

"Wow... She's pretty Do you think they will be made marriage candidates?" Amane whispered to Kiriko. It seems that everyone in her group was looking at how beautiful Souren was.

"Probably"

"... By the way... she is a man." Suiren whispered in a loud voice.

""""eh!?""" All of them stared, eyes wide open at Souren.

"That's a man!?" They were amazed and desperate to find evidence.

"But if she were a man, she wouldn't be one of Seina's bridal candidates"

(((((..... maybe that's for the best))))))

× × ×

"... That was scary. I was really scared." Souren, who left Makihi's private residence, murmured.

"The one who occasionally stared at me... that was Kiriko right, Seina-sama's wife, isn't she?"

"You too? I thought I was going to be killed... Seriously, just by being in her line of sight, I felt like I was going to die. She was giving us the evil eye, right?"

“Oh, you too?! I was so close to just running away! Ahhhhh, she's a Juraian Princess?”

Not only Souren but Saiyu and also the warrior Kaguya were trembling with fear. There had been a misunderstanding and her fascinated gaze had struck terror in them.